DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 365 059 EC 302 684

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TITLE The Effects of Full Inclusion on Regular Education Teachers. Final Report.
INSTITUTION San Francisco State Univ., CA. California Research Inst.
SPONS AGENCY Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (ED), Washington, DC.
PUB DATE 9 Nov 92
CONTRACT G0087C3056
NOTE 56p.
PUB TYPE Reports - Research/Technical (143)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC03 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Educational Philosophy; *Educational Practices; Elementary Education; Elementary School Students; Ethnography; *Mainstreaming; *Normalization (Disabilities); Qualitative Research; *Severe Disabilities; Social Integration; *Teacher Attitudes
IDENTIFIERS Johnson City Central School District NY

ABSTRACT

This study used an ethnographic research methodology to identify effects of inclusion of students with severe disabilities on regular class teachers at the Harry L. Johnson Elementary School in Johnson City, New York. The school has been gradually integrating students with severe disabilities into regular classes since 1986. As of the 1991-92 school year, students with severe disabilities had been integrated into regular kindergarten classes for 5 years, first grade for 4 years, second grade for 3 years, third grade for 2 years, and fourth grade for the first time. Teachers' perceptions were identified through semi-structured interviews, a questionnaire, direct observation, and review of extant data. Teachers expressed and demonstrated overwhelmingly positive effects of inclusion, with findings organized into 11 themes about teacher attitudes and practices. The themes include: teaching and learning about disabilities, curriculum and materials, success for all, collaborative problem solving, expectation of inclusion, teams, student assessment and Individualized Education Programs, flexibility, learning to accept or overlook challenges presented by these students that can interfere with instruction but that are not easily resolved, stress, and accountability. The study concludes that inclusion did not produce entirely new effects, but rather amplified or generalized attitudes, philosophies, and practices that had existed in the school. The questionnaire and observation form are appended. (Contains 12 references.) (JDD)

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THE EFFECTS OF FULL INCLUSION ON REGULAR EDUCATION TEACHERS

Grant from

California Research Institute
on the
Integration of Students with Severe Disabilities
San Francisco State University
(funded by the U.S. Department of Education)

to

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FINAL REPORT
November 9, 1992

EC 30 26 84

This project was supported by grant #G0087C3056 from the U.S. Department of Education to the California Research Institute, San Francisco State University, with a subcontract to the State University of New York at Binghamton. The opinions expressed herein do not necessarily reflect those of the U.S. Department of Education and no official endorsement should be inferred.

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Acknowledgements

The Principal Investigator of this project thanks the following people for supporting the research described in this report:

Dr. Christine Salisbury, Principal Investigator, and Ms. Mary Mason Palombaro, Project Coordinator, Collaborative Education Project, for assisting with planning this study, and for sharing the results of their research and development activities;

Mr. Arthur Chambers, Director of Special Services, Johnson City Central School District, and former Principal, Harry L. Johnson Elementary School; Mrs. Garnita Cole, former Principal; and Mrs. Jo Pennington, current Principal, for providing guidance and access to their faculty;

Mrs. Stephanie Garbarino, Mrs. Ann Goroleski, Mrs. Judith Kolbenschlag, Mrs. Maria Mangino, Mrs. Jo Pennington, Mrs. Madeleine Petrigala, Mrs. Karen Reynolds, Mrs. Susan Syrica, Mr. Gregg Veech, Mrs. Nancy Vaughn, and Mrs. Pat Wilber, teachers at Harry L Johnson Elementary School, for generously sharing their thoughts and opening their classrooms;

Mrs. Jackie Coleman, Elementary Education student, State University of New York, for enthusiastically sharing her reflections on student teaching; and

Ms. Sandra Weitzman and Mrs. Maureen Kline, Graduate Assistants, School of Education and Human Development, State University of New York at Binghamton, for their extensive assistance with data collection and analysis.

Abstract

Including students with severe disabilities in regular classes is being advocated on the basis of benefits for children with and without disabilities, but there is little information on how it effects their teachers. This study used an ethnographic research methodology to identify effects of inclusion on regular class teachers in one elementary school. Teachers expressed and demonstrated overwhelmingly positive effects, with findings organized into eleven themes about teacher attitudes and practices. These findings are consistent with other emerging research.

As inclusion of students with severe disabilities in regular classes in neighborhood schools gains recognition as a best educational practice, research has examined the effects on both students with severe disabilities (Cole & Meyer, 1991; Halvorsen & Sailor, 1990) and students without disabilities (Vandercook et al., 1991). This research confirms that inclusion is beneficial for students with severe disabilities and, at worst, has no effect on students without disabilities. While special educators have become vocal advocates for inclusion, successfully educating children with severe disabilities in regular classes depends heavily upon collaboration with regular class teachers. Understandably, concerns have been raised about additional demands placed on these teachers, who have not been prepared to teach students with severe disabilities or to modify general education curricula and instructional practices to include them. Research indicates that both special and regular educators have concerns about how inclusion of students with severe disabilities will affect them (Semmel, Abernathy, Butera, & Lesar, 1991). While advocating inclusion of students with mild disabilities in regular classes, Jenkins, Pious, and Jewell (1990) advocated against inclusion of students with severe disabilities, stating, "It would not be fair to regular classroom teachers..." and, "The line needs to be drawn somewhere to protect teachers from unrealistic demands..." (p.485).

The purpose of this study was to identify the effects of integrating students with severe disabilities on regular education teachers in inclusive schools.

Method

Setting

Harry L. Johnson Elementary School (Harry L) in Johnson City, New York has been integrating students with severe disabilities into regular classes since 1986. Rather than immediately integrate all students then served in self-contained placements, a more gradual approach to integration was assumed: all kindergarten-age students would be placed in regular kindergarten classes and grow up with their peers. As of the 1991-92 school year, students with severe disabilities had been integrated into regular kindergarten classes for 5 years, first grade for 4 years, second grade for 3 years, third grade for 2 years, and fourth grade for the first time. As other students with severe disabilities moved into the school district, they also were placed in the grade appropriate to their age, the same class where they would be placed if not disabled. Although several students with disabilities were clustered in one kindergarten class during the first year of integration, later classes reflected the principle of natural proportions. Johnson City generally adheres to a neighborhood school philosophy, but the architectural barriers of the other elementary school have resulted in all children with physical disabilities attending Harry L School.

Harry L educates approximately 650 children, including 8 students considered to have severe disabilities, in grades K through 4. Another 5 students with severe disabilities have attended Harry L at various times since 1986. There are 24 regular class teachers, 4 support (special education) teachers, and 10 special education aides. All teachers work in teams, and specials (art, music, physical education) are scheduled so each team has joint planning time. School district philosophy promotes inclusion, a team

approach, mastery learning, cooperative learning, and event driven curricula, all as means to ensure student success. Teachers at Harry L express commitment to these approaches.

Participants

Regular class teachers who had educated children with severe disabilities as integral members of their class for one or more years, and the special education teachers who supported them, were invited to participate. Three special education teachers and eight regular class teachers were identified. The school principal discussed the project with eligible teachers, and all agreed to participate. The PI sent a follow-up letter to describing the project to each teacher (see Appendix A). All 11 teachers participated in the interview portion of the study. Only 4 of the 8 regular class teachers had students with severe disabilities in their classes at the time of the study, however, so they were the only ones observed during the second part of the study.

Because eligible teachers were already participating in other research and systems change activities, the school principal introduced this project to the teachers and ascertained their interest prior to contact from the PI, so no one would feel pressured to participate. At the conclusion of the study, participants were each awarded a small honorarium as compensation for their time and effort. The PI consulted with the school principal to determine the form and timing of compensation; they informed teachers about the honorarium only after the study was concluded, to avoid influencing decisions about participation.

Procedure

Teachers' perceptions of effects of integrating students with severe disabilities were identified through a series of semi-structured interviews, and triangulated with results of a questionnaire, direct observation, and review of extant data. For purposes of this study, "students with severe disabilities" was defined as students performing at the moderate, severe, or profound levels of mental retardation, including students with multiple disabilities. Teachers were reminded that the population did not include students with severe emotional disturbance. To further define the population, teachers named 13 current and former students considered to have severe disabilities, as well as students who were not included in the population.

Initial interview. Ten teachers participated in a semi-structured interview on January 21, 1992. The interview was held during school hours and lasted approximately 2 hours. Another grant funded substitute teachers so participants could be released from their classes. The following questions served as a guide for the initial interview.

How long have children with severe disabilities been members of your class? How many children total?

How are students with severe disabilities included in your class?

Has including them in your class influenced you teaching? If so, how? (e.g., selection of materials, groupings, delivery of instruction, dealing with problem behavior, discussion of disabilities/different abilities/difference, accommodation for disabilities in your class)

Has inclusion influenced your approach to teamwork? If so, how? (e.g.,

students with severe disabilities in your class affected you on a personal level? If so, how?

Individual interviews were scheduled during work hours at the time that best suited each teacher: before students arrived in the morning, during the teacher's lunch break, or after students left in the afternoon. Each interview lasted from 30 to 60 minutes, depending upon the time available. Although two interviews with each teacher had been planned, the PI identified few new themes or questions and few teachers indicated they had more to say after the first individual interview. When teachers did have additional information, a second interview was conducted. Whether interviewed once or twice, all teachers were interviewed individually a total of 45 to 90 minutes. Individual interviews were audiotaped, transcribed, and the content analyzed using the themes identified in the first group interview.

Final group interview. Ten of the 11 teachers participated in a final group interview on April 27, 1992. The interview was held after school and lasted approximately one hour. Prior to the interview, participants were provided with a written report of preliminary results, which were reviewed during the interview. Thus the group interview served as a "member check," offering participants the opportunity to agree, disagree, clarify, and elaborate on findings to date. The PI also used the group forum to ask about areas where there seemed to be conflicting views. This interview was audiotaped, videotaped, transcribed, and analyzed.

Questionnaire. During the interviews, teachers often reported using specific strategies (e.g., cooperative learning groups) or being guided by certain philosophies. To clarify the extent of these strategies and beliefs, both for individual teachers and among the teachers as a group, the PI developed a two-page questionnaire (see Appendix B). The questionnaire was distributed during the final interview, completed anonymously, and collected by a teacher the following week. Questionnaires were returned by 8 teachers, including 6 classroom teachers, 1 support teacher, and 1 teacher who did not identify her/his role. Respondents represented all grades in the building. Results are compiled in Appendix B and discussed in relation to each theme.

Direct observation. The interviews and questionnaire identified teachers perceptions of how inclusion of students with severe disabilities had influenced them professionally. Supporting evidence for each theme was sought through direct observation of classroom instruction and team meetings. The PI developed a protocol to observe classroom instruction for evidence of the themes identified during interviews (see Appendix C). Using this protocol, the PI and GA conducted approximately 7 hours of observation on 10 occasions and the RA conducted approximately 4 hours of observation on 6 occasions, during the months of March, April, and May, 1992. Observations were made in 4 classrooms, consisting of 1 kindergarten, 2 first grades, and 1 fourth grade. The PI and RA conducted parts of 6 observations jointly to establish agreement both in use of the observation protocol and in recognition of classroom phenomena. The PI also observed one team meeting for each of 2 teams during the month of May. No specific protocol was used for these observations.

Additional classroom observations were scheduled but cancelled due to student absence or scheduling conflicts (e.g., student evaluation, pull-out

therapy session). Another conflict was in the Research Assistant's work load. Initial project planning was for the Research Assistant to conduct the majority of observations, with the PI performing reliability checks. The RA was also responsible for transcribing interviews, however, which took more time than expected and limited the RA's availability for direct observation. A third limiting factor was that, as noted previously, only 4 of the 8 regular class teachers eligible to participate in this study had students with severe disabilities on their class lists at the time of the study. While every effort was made to observe classrooms in a representative way, additional observations would have been desirable.

Extant data. Dr. Christine Salisbury, of SUNY-Binghamton, collected extensive data in the target classrooms during a three-year Collaborative Education Project, and made these data available for analysis. The school principal also agreed to make administrative records available as appropriate for corroboration.

Results

Teachers identified and provided examples of several ways they had been effected by including students with severe disabilities in their classes. Evidence of these effects was found through a variety of sources. It is important to note that all teachers reported some of the effects described below, but all teachers did not experience the same effects. The effects are discussed related to the following themes:

Teaching and Learning about Disabilities
Curriculum and Materials
Success for All
Collaborative Problem Solving
Expectation of Inclusion
Teams
Student Assessment and IEPs
Flexibility
Let It Go
Stress
Accountability

In reporting these findings, students have pseudonyms, while teachers are identified by the grade level they teach or support. Some regular class teachers have taught more than one grade during the period when students with severe disabilities were educated in inclusive classes. For example, the "kindergarten/fourth grade teacher" formerly taught kindergarten, and was teaching fourth grade at the time of these interviews. One teacher, the "second & third grade teacher" taught a combined class of second and third graders. The special educators are identified as support teachers for certain grades.

Teaching and Learning about Disabilities

Teachers reported learning a great deal about disabilities because they have these students in their classes. For the most part, information is provided incidentally during team planning meetings, in brief conversations sprinkled through the instructional day, and during incidental teacher

Second/fourth grade teacher: That led to a great discussion in my room because [Kelly] comes down my hall.... Somebody said, "Why does Kelly scream all the time?" And I said, "Well, what do you think about that?" "Well, why does Sara cry all the time?" "Why does Jamie hit all the time?" And it really led to a big discussion about the children.... Somebody said, "It's how they get their feelings out." Somebody asked, "Every time Sara cries, does it mean she's hurting or something's hurting her?" And somebody said, "Well, no. She was crying the other day when we took her out of the reading corner.... She was probably mad that we had to take her out and that that time had to end. Or if she's doing something she really likes, that's the only way she can relay her feelings." And then it got into some kids really want to be with Sara and some are hesitant, and it got to, "Why do you think that is?" And some of the kids said, "Well, sometimes she gets really stiff and her eyes go back." And it led into a seizure discussion.

Eventually the children start educating the adults, both influencing attitudes and modeling strategies. Examples were given during the interviews.

Second grade teacher: The children seem so natural, especially by the time they're in second grade. They have developed relationships from kindergarten and first grade. And I think that the first year that the teacher has children with these kinds of needs in the room, that adult is coming with a certain amount of baggage, so to speak, and I think it's wonderful to watch the children, because it's so natural for them.... If you just kind of stand back and let it flow, you start getting rid of some of that baggage.

Second & third grade teacher: Last year I had Mark and Sara and I was a first year teacher and I didn't really know how it was going to be just to have 24 kids in my room, let alone these two. And I remember thinking this was going to be beyond me even to do this. And [the support teacher] gave me the lead on this. He said, "Just let the kids go with it. Just watch the kids and see what they do." So for the first week, I really just stood back and watched the kids and they really taught me how I was supposed to be with these children. It wasn't anything that someone sat me down and said, "Now, this is what you do with them." The kids definitely tell you what you should do with them. They know, because they've been with them since kindergarten, and they know them and they know their little quirks, and what they like and don't like.

First grade teacher: [An aide had taken one child to the bathroom and another child, waiting outside, started screaming.] And [the aide] said the screaming stopped all of a sudden. And she came out and there was [a child without disabilities] stroking Kelly's back and calming her down. It was totally natural.... See what the kids do with the situation. They handle it fine.

Second/fourth grade teacher: A sub came in at the beginning of

> the year, and it was 9:30, and Stacy came up and said, "Sara's supposed to have her braces on right now." It's something you don't focus on every minute, but they know....
>
> Support teacher for second, third, & fourth grade: One of the nicest things for [the regular class teachers] as a big offshoot of inclusion is that they're having stuff they never had the chance to learn when they were in school. The kids are growing up learning sign language. The kids are growing up seeing things people used to call grotesque as commonplace.... "Yeah, he drools, but that's just what he does."... But it's just something that's accepted. Or the kids tell the teacher, "You know, we're out of Wipes. We've got to have Wipes."

Understanding the nature of a student's disability has enabled teachers to be more tolerant of some instructional and behavioral challenges. While teachers still see students with problem behavior as the greatest challenge to inclusion, teachers more often recognize problem behavior as an exaggerated form of typical behavior.

> First/fourth grade teacher: Over the last five years, since we've had children with special needs in the building, one thing that we've absolutely learned is that kids are kids are kids. And where some of these behaviors are a lot more exaggerated than they are in typical kids, nobody likes to come in off the playground.... And with Jeff, and John, and Randy, and with hearing impaired children, and emotionally disturbed children, I really wanted to see growth at the same rate. I wanted these disruptive behaviors to stop immediately and they don't. But then I had a couple other kids who are really as much or more of a problem last year who aren't classified. They were typical kids who weren't typical. And so I think one advantage we've had in the last five years is that we've begun to look at children as individuals. And when something is more exaggerated with a classified child, it has to be dealt with, and then sometimes when we have children who aren't classified who have some of these exaggerated behaviors, we have to problem solve that individually also.

All eight teachers who completed the questionnaire about inclusion reported that they teach about students with disabilities both as a formal part of the curriculum and incidentally, as the need arises. During classroom observations, discrete incidents of teaching and learning about disabilities were not observed. The ease with which regular class teachers and students without disabilities interacted with students with severe disabilities and responded to specific student needs was evident, however.

A third level effect was also discovered in one kindergarten and one fourth grade. Each class had a student teacher who, as an integral part of her practice teaching in elementary education, was learning about students with disabilities as well as the values that support inclusion, strategies that promote inclusion, and the outcomes that result from inclusion. One student teacher was eager to talk about how this experience affected her.

Fourth grade student teacher: Because I'm from the traditional ideas of the school, that [students with severe disabilities] were always in a separate class, I didn't really stop to think about what would happen if they weren't [in separate classes] anymore, ... and that's so sad when I think back on it. When I walked into that class, I was very shocked to see Sara sitting there.... At first I felt a lot of pity toward her, and I know now that's not the answer. It was so natural, that I didn't notice her 'til maybe ten minutes after I was there. And that amazed me. I thought, "I can't believe I didn't see this girl sitting there!" And when I got home, I thought, "How is this ever going to work in a classroom like this? You've got 21 students that are functioning at a certain level, and then you've got this other girl who is obviously not up to where these other kids are."...

The one thing that really stuck out in my mind is that it's not only wonderful for Sara to be there, but the other children, it teaches them so very much: cooperation, compassion. The first half of the semester, I thought they were being nice to her because she was disabled ... and they feel real sorry for this girl. But by the middle of the semester, I realized they didn't think about it like that. Only I did.... This little girl was one of them....

The kids kept telling me certain things that would excite Sara, and I thought ... they were just wanting to believe that. "If you wear the color red, that's really good, and these neon colors really excite her." And one day, I actually saw her follow the color red and smile, and there was a whole transformation for me.... I think of these poor kids in segregated classrooms.... An aide or a teacher can only do so much as far as inspiring this student, but the kids were with her, and they were doing things with her, they were talking to her, they were touching her. Sara had constant stimulation the entire day....

We did a tape of government sounds just for Sara [as part of a unit on government] and the kids were so into it, they felt like they were giving her something so special, and I looked at it as though we were giving Sara this special present. And [the cooperating teacher] said, "That's not true. You're giving her the education she deserves. You're not giving her anything above and beyond what she's supposed to have. It's not a gift. It's expected." ... So we totally revamped how we were going to give it to her ... so it was just part of our lesson.... We were doing [another project], and [some kids] kept saying, "Why don't we feature Sara, because that would be really nice?" And this little girl raised her hand and said, "But wait. I don't think that's a good idea. All of us are special in our own way." And I thought, "Wow!" ...

Just to be a neophyte teacher like that, just entering the system, it was culture shock, but by the end of the semester when I walked out of there, I was definitely an advocate, and there would be nothing to change my mind.... If I went into a classroom now where there was a student like Sara, I would not feel nervous, and that's a very important thing to me. I walked in there [the first day] and honestly, when I saw Sara I started to have tears in my eyes. I said, "This poor little girl." And yet, when I left, I thought she was the happiest thing I had ever seen. Even the little kids that are sometimes little pains in the

neck, they were so tender with her.... And I saw the innocence of children come out with her, and that was something that brought tears to my eyes. But they were certainly different tears from the first day.

Curriculum and Materials

During the past five years, teachers at Harry L have studied and adopted "developmentally appropriate practices" as advocated by National Association for Education of the Young Child (Bredekamp, 1986). They have moved from an emphasis on paper and pencil tasks to more manipulatives and creative methods, not just in the primary grades but throughout the elementary years. In the inclusion questionnaire, four teachers reported that they would have moved in the direction of developmentally appropriate practice, whether or not they had students with severe disabilities in their classes. The other four respondents, however, reported that having students with severe disabilities in their classes forced them to make changes in their curriculum that benefitted all students. During the interviews, teachers described their thinking.

First grade teacher A: I think I used the children with special needs as part of an excuse to do things I wanted to in the classroom, but before I didn't feel I had legitimate reasons. Like where we do stations and the kids rotate from one to another. I always felt like an art table or a clay table was kind of frivolous, that I shouldn't do that more than once or twice a week, because what are the kids really getting out of it? But once I started working with [two students with disabilities who] still struggle a bit with first grade curriculum, I thought, "Well if we're reading about birds and doing math about birds, they can make clay birds. Everybody can be successful doing that."... And then after learning about more developmentally appropriate practices for first graders, I realized I don't need an excuse.... All kids can benefit from it.

First grade teacher B: This time I was using real coins. Years ago I would have used cardboard coins that came in the book. I would have had all the kids with their little envelopes of cardboard coins and going crazy because they were dropping them or couldn't find the right ones. I also would probably have used the picture coins on a ditto sheet, and had the kids adding up dimes and nickels using picture coins, which I even have a hard time telling which is a dime and which is a penny in the pictures.

Support teacher for kindergarten & first grade: I think now, when I first walked into kindergarten, what a nightmare. There were three workbooks in kindergarten that they had to do. I mean everyday these little kids were doing paper and pencil tasks.... These activities didn't lend themselves very easily to adapt so everyone could be included. And little by little, it was like, "Well, let's not order that for next year. Instead of the math book, let's do more manipulatives. Let's get rid of the language arts workbook."

Kindergarten/first grade teacher: I was accountable for three workbooks for these little kindergarten kids. And I remember [a

university faculty member] coming over and saying, "Oh my," and I said, "We have to do these. This is what I'm supposed to be doing." And it really made us look at developmentally appropriate practices, and that's when all this stuff started. And I kept saying, "I can't do this. I can't do these workbooks with these kids. What are we going to do?" ... We started getting information on developmentally appropriate practices, from NAEYC, and all those kinds of things, because it was wrong [to do the workbooks]. And probably we would have kept doing it if we hadn't had children with special needs.

First grade teacher: When I started working with [students with disabilities] I felt like everything went pretty smoothly, because we had already started getting into developmentally appropriate practices and doing stations, not having a teacher stand in front of the room.

Support teacher for kindergarten & first grade: And if one child needs manipulatives, putting them in the middle of the table and saying, "Anybody who needs them can use them," and not pointing out that he really needs to use them.

An effort was made to corroborate this reported shift by analyzing materials orders for relationships between placement of students with severe disabilities with a teacher and the types of materials the teacher ordered. Unfortunately, school records do not indicate which teacher ordered which materials, so correlations could not be determined.

One special education teacher also noted that recognition of developmentally appropriate practices had positively influenced her view of an appropriate curriculum for students with severe disabilities.

Support teacher for kindergarten & first grade: When we first started back in 87, I really strongly thought that nothing should be taught that wasn't functional. We were in a classroom with other five and six year olds, and I would look at the activities they were doing, and if I didn't believe they would have an outcome for future environments, I would say, "No, we can't participate in that."... Yes they need to be taught functional skills, but that social aspect needed to be included, and ... it's OK for a five year old child to be a five year old child.

When students with severe disabilities could not successfully participate in regular class activities, teachers reported making individualized curriculum adaptations. Class observations confirmed the following general approach to curriculum adaptation:

Same task, easier step: While other first graders worked on writing numeral to 100, Todd worked on writing numerals to 10.

Same task, adapted materials: While other first graders made cards for a friend, Ben wrote his greeting on the computer.

Same activity, different task: While other first graders sang a song, Kelly was taught to sit with the group, wear headphones to hear a

taped song, and hold her hands on the speaker of the tape recorder. While other fourth graders reviewed their math homework, one student helped Sara hold a neon crayon and write answers on the page. When the friend read the paper, she shined a red flashlight on the part she was reading. Sara's goal related to head control, grasp, and vision.

Parallel activity: While other first graders worked at stations, Kelly was offered a variety of materials and activities in the area of each station. At one point she left the classroom, carrying her bag, for a trip to the bathroom and then to the nurse's office for medication. This addressed needs related to health, toileting, and travel in the school, and respected her need to change activity more frequently than other students.

While adapting curriculum for students with severe disabilities was essential for their successful inclusion, teachers reported that they now provide many ways for all children to display knowledge, rather than one activity. They look at children more as individuals and allow for individual learning styles.

Support teacher for second, third, & fourth grade: We had oranges and we drew the equator on them, and we put the North and South Pole in with toothpicks. And some of that was really good for Marshall; you know his hand strength was really poor. And just doing all those activities was fun for him, and he was involved with the rest of the kids, and they were learning something at another level too.

Second/fourth grade teacher: I used to have this notion that manipulatives were just for K-1-2 or early primary. The fourth graders love to work hands-on more than anything.... I can't remember the last time I offered just one way to assess, or one way of guided practice, or one way of independent practice. They always have a choice. We just did a culminating activity today. Some of them are doing board games; some of them are doing dioramas; some of them are doing a story map. You know, there are many different learners. You have to offer a variety of ways.

In response to the questionnaire on inclusion, all eight teachers reported that they usually or frequently planned lessons for their classes so all students can use manipulatives, so lessons reach students with varied learning styles, so students can demonstrate knowledge in varied ways, so students of varied abilities can participate and succeed, with cooperative goal structures, and with mixed ability groupings. While the teachers reported planning lessons with individualistic goal structures frequently or occasionally, they reported occasionally, rarely, or never planning lessons with competitive goal structures or same ability groupings. These practices, evident during classroom observations, appear to be both a necessary condition for and an effect of successful efforts to include students with severe disabilities in regular class activities.

Success for All

The school district has the stated belief that "All children can and will learn well." When asked directly about this belief, all teachers endorsed it quite emphatically. In other discussions, however, teachers conceded that they hadn't always "walked the talk" and that having students with severe disabilities in their classes helped bring deeper meaning to their belief.

> First/fourth grade teacher: Seven years ago when I was teaching on a 4-5 team at Harry L, I had some learning disabled children in my class.... When those children were in my room, they had to do what everyone else had. We were out for mastery and everyone had to fit the same mold. And even though we said we looked at the children as individuals, I don't think we were until we got into the developmentally appropriate practices, and we started thinking together and we started letting synergism happen. We started bringing the OT and the PT and the speech teacher into the classroom and everybody started to work collaboratively, and now all of a sudden we're seeing a lot in children other than the classified children that we never saw before.

> First grade teacher: [Having students with severe disabilities in the class] has made me much more comfortable with altering the expectations for children as needed, and much more comfortable with the fact that children learn at different rates and there are different learning styles.... I remember feeling very frustrated about it. But now I'm very comfortable with, [a child with learning disabilities] might not learn to read this year, but he will certainly learn to read sometime.... I think it took me a while to realize what Jill's success would be.... I felt like [Jill] would make progress, but it took me a while to realize the adaptations were fine, that it was OK.... When we were playing a game of number bingo, she could be right with us doing it. She did what her peers were doing with just modified expectations.... I always realized she would be successful in some way, but being able to include her and measure her success and seeing it on a daily basis was something I learned from having her in my room.

With their commitment to success, teachers were concerned about what would be expected of the students with severe disabilities when placed in regular classes.

> First/fourth grade teacher: One of the things we talked about in the beginning years ago was that we didn't want a watered down special ed program... and I kept wondering if that's what we were producing in some cases. [The support teacher] helped me with that a lot. But as we kept going and finding different ways for kids to exhibit learning, what we found was that our standards of performance were not being watered down. We were doing the branching out and taking the kids to higher levels that we should have been doing all along.

As discussed under Curriculum and Materials, having children with severe disabilities in their classrooms moved teachers to re-examine their approach.

As they redesigned curriculum, materials, and methods for the students with severe disabilities, they also saw how others could be more successful.

> First grade teacher: [Planning activities appropriate for students with severe disabilities] legitimized my wanting to do things that seemed for fun and less academic. You know, clay is good for fine motor, and Ben or Kelly might need fine motor, so I would use them as an excuse. But then, as I pulled out activities like that, I really realized that all kids need activities like that on a daily basis, not just once a week, on a special Friday.

> Support teacher for second, third, & fourth grade: [A third grade teacher] wasn't that happy with what the kids were learning ... so she brought it up at the team meeting and she decided to go with activity centers and she planned two of them specifically for kids who weren't really being successful, not all kids who were classified. And Patrick and Joey were two kids in one group she pointed out, and they had manipulatives and they laid out a crocodile on the ground and measured it. And they were doing things that were meaningful, hands on, that Patrick and Joey could stay with.... Or even with kids who have a hard time structuring their thoughts, to put them in some kind of order to tell a story, just having them draw a picture instead of using letters. Just go through the pictures to tell the story; draw it out. If you can retell it, that's part of storytelling, isn't it? So having them go to that point and then having them work on taking the picture now to words and sentences and chunking them up.

Teachers now recognize and look for individual rates of progress and learning styles for all their students, as reflected in descriptions of two students without identified disabilities.

> Kindergarten teacher: He's always moving, always moving. He can't sit still. I can't ask him to sit still. He can go in the back and move around. He takes in everything like a sponge. He may be moving, but what I'm reading or what he's doing, he's absorbing. And the things he comes back with are absolutely amazing. Whereas, if I said "Sit," I think he'd be sitting there just thinking, "She's making me sit here."... But when he's allowed the freedom to move about ... [he's] taking it all in.

> First grade teacher: I gave them a lot of different coins and had them add them up for me. And I had one little child, while she was waiting for me to get to her, she was patterning with them: like dime-nickel-dime-nickel-dime. And she was very proud of it. Previously I think I would have been just aghast. "You're not supposed to be patterning; you're supposed to be adding." Whereas now, I looked at that child and realized that developmentally, that's where she was, and so I encouraged her to expand on her patterns and made a note that I would get back to her later.... And it was wonderful. She looked at me and said, "I'm really smart," and I said, "Yes you are."

Teachers at Harry L put more emphasis on cooperative goal structures than on competition. Questionnaire respondents indicated that they usually or frequently use cooperative goal structures and mixed ability groupings and only occasionally or never use competitive goal structures and same ability groupings. Although these strategies were used and advocated at Harry L prior to inclusion of students with severe disabilities, inclusion seems to have strengthened teachers convictions about and broadened their applications of heterogeneous cooperative groups. Teachers have also found that, when including students with disabilities, ensuring success for all students means being intentional about group composition.

> Second & third grade teacher: You have to match up more carefully. You can't just give a random match-up and say, "OK go sit where you want to sit in these groups." If you put students with Mark and Sara who aren't receptive to Mark and Sara, they're both going to lose in the group because [the children without disabilities] are not going to have a partner who will work with them and Mark and Sara are not going to have someone who will be more receptive to them.

> First/fourth grade teacher: What we've found is that in some cases it's a lot better to leave the children with someone, with a partner that we know they can work with, rather than give them an additional difficulty to work through. So with children with special needs, we talk to them privately and ask sometimes if this is warranted, "Who would you like to work with? Would you like to sit at this table? I think you would be really good with...."

Teachers reported that they have moved from "mainstreaming" (having children with disabilities in the class without supports or adaptations) to "inclusion" and integration (ensuring participation and success by providing appropriate programmatic and social supports).

> Second/fourth grade teacher: Even though Mark and Sara didn't look like typical second graders, I really had set in my mind in the beginning, "OK, they have to learn their addition facts in second grade. They have to be reading on a second grade level by the time they get out of here." I really had that in the back of my head. And I think that's a big thing for teachers. They really feel like they're responsible for getting through the curriculum no matter what type of disability the child has.... [The support teacher explained,] "Well, Sara's goal is to respond to the color red, because she really likes red, and someday maybe we can get her to use a communication system with her eyes responding to a color." Then you start to understand. But it made me become more flexible with knowing that maybe I will partly be responsible for some of the goals that she needs to meet, but she's not going to read and that's not her primary goal.

Later this teacher's fourth grade class was observed during a lesson about customs of Iroquois Indians. After an introductory discussion, students generated ideas in cooperative groups, and then brought their ideas back to a large group discussion. Sara, who has severe disabilities, including

blindness and severe developmental delay, is a regular member of a cooperative group. While all the groups listed their ideas on paper, Sara's group wrote on a red transparency on a backlit easel positioned where Sara could see it. Sara's group members periodically checked to see if she was looking, spoke to her to regain her attention, and repositioned her head if necessary.

In the past, concerns had been raised about whether attention to the needs of students with severe disabilities might take away from meeting the needs of other students. In contrast, teachers expressed commitment to the belief that success for students with severe disabilities increased success for others. One of the desired exit behaviors for students in the Johnson City Central School District is concern for others, and inclusion of students with severe disabilities at Harry L is clearly achieving that outcome. On a more pragmatic level, however, teachers consistently expressed belief that their efforts to include students with severe disabilities was helping them become better teachers for all students.

> First grade teacher: You know, I had so much support. And extra personnel to help out, that you're child actually gains more. And not to mention gaining more in the area of concern for others, ... but even just with the academics. The typical children gain so much because there's an extra pair of hands in the room.

> First/fourth grade teacher: Because of the way the teams operate, teams with children with special needs have the teacher with special ed expertise. So we look ahead at what we're going to be teaching and take into account the IEP and the needs of those children along with everybody else. So just as we look ahead and see what we're going to do to meet the needs of other kids, that's the case here too.... In no case, ever, is that a detriment to other children in the class. What we're finding is that when we use techniques that have been traditionally used in special ed, everybody is learning better. And that is not a problem; that's an asset.

Collaborative Problem Solving

Another desired exit behavior for Johnson City students is problem solving. Several teachers at Harry L participated in a Collaborative Education Project in which they learned "collaborative problem solving," a formal problem solving process applied to enhance successful integration of students with severe disabilities in regular education contexts (Salisbury & Palombaro, 1991). In this process, children without disabilities become partners with adults to adapt activities, and often take the lead and facilitate problem solving. Although not all teachers had been formally trained in the formal process, they all expressed enthusiasm for having the students help devise strategies for inclusion, both because of the quality of their solutions and because of the learning that occurs in the process.

> Second grade teacher: I find that the children have better ideas than I do. And they're more natural. I might get the ideas, but they become very phoney and set up, whereas kids are very honest and open.

Kindergarten teacher: They have some really good ideas, some really creative ideas. And sometimes we think of things that would make it easier for us, or make it easier for the aides.... But the children think of more creative ways that they think would be fun, or that they think would be interesting.

Support teacher for second, third, & fourth grade: (Referring to a game devised for a student with severe disabilities) You let the kids try and go through problem solving, but also fail. Fail is a bad word maybe, but have something that doesn't work, redo it, go back and do it again.... But you can, as an adult, be tempted to say, "Oh no, that's not going to work." And you can stop it right there and let it go no further.... But letting kids go through that process and not having things work the first time is really important.... [The game] didn't work. It all flopped. And Michael built it with [the student with severe disabilities]. Tape and rubber bands and pencils.... You know the physics of tape, and weight, and you know force. And the kids don't know those properties, and it's good that they don't. And things are going to fall down with a certain weight, but let it fall. Because then they can just find out how to hold it up better next time.

The teachers also found that involving the class in problem solving was natural, because often it was the students who first saw the need, who had vested interests in solutions, and who were influential in implementing solutions.

Second & third grade teacher: The kids are the ones who helped me problem solve how we were going to get Mark and Sara in on this.... And with Mark and Sara there in their day-to-day life since kindergarten, it's just something that happens naturally with them. If I had to sit down and think, "How am I going to include Mark and Sara in this?" I would rack my brain and be there for hours and probably come up with nothing. But these kids, you don't even have to present it to them. You don't even have to say, "How can we include Mark and Sara?" They're already on to it and moved past it.

First/fourth grade teacher: Randy had a penchant for taking off his shoe and throwing it and hitting somebody in the back of the head. That was one of his favorite things to do, so that was the topic of several problem solving sessions.... And then, because they're involved in the process, then they're involved in the results, and they carry through with what they say.

Collaborative problems solving extended beyond the school to field trips and other events, such as Field Days, an annual outdoor recreational and competitive event.

First/fourth grade teacher: We had Jeff participating in everything else, but with his wheelchair, I wondered how we were going to get him around the grassy area. And [the support teacher] was tied up with someone else.... So I had another child with me. We trundled

> Jeff around and the kids were absolutely thrilled. At first I said, "I don't know if Jeff is going to do this." And the kids were all standing there with me and they said, "Well he has to. He's part of the class." It was just understood. So I said, "OK, how are we going to do it?" And they said, "We'll help."

During classroom observations, specific instances of collaborative problem solving were not observed. During the three-year Collaborative Education Project, however, numerous instances of collaborative problem solving were recorded, addressing issues related to students' physical, social, and academic needs, as well as staff needs related to logistics (Salisbury & Palombaro, 1991). Salisbury and Palombaro cited the following examples, which illustrate how students became peer advocates.

> In the cafeteria, a child in a wheelchair was sitting at a different table from his classmates because, when sitting together, cafeteria monitors were concerned that his wheelchair blocked aisles. Classmates generated the solution that they would rearrange tables and assume responsibility for putting them back when lunch was over.
>
> A child with severe disabilities was not an active participant in playground activities, such as using the slide. Peers determined that the child should have a helmet and then they would take the child down the slide.
>
> When a class was making Mother's Day cards, a teacher's aide was concerned about how a student who cannot hear or talk could let her mother know how important she is. Peers suggested that they help her make a book and make choices to say why her mother is important. They also determined that the student should chose which group she wanted to work with.
>
> A child with severe disabilities arrived at school on an early bus, before an aide arrived to take her to the playground. While other children walked around the school to the playground, the bus driver called the child's teacher, creating routine interruptions. Students and faculty devised a plan for children from the bus, including the student's brother, to walk the child to the playground. The bus driver called playground monitors by walkie talkie to let them know the child was off the bus and going to the playground.

Teachers reported that the collaborative problem solving strategy helped them operationalize their belief that all children, including those with the most severe disabilities, could be successful in regular education settings.

Expectation of Inclusion

Over the five years that students with severe disabilities have been educated at Harry L, teachers have developed increasing expectations that all children will participate in regular class activities. This belief was not strong at the outset, however.

> Support teacher for kindergarten & first grade: I think some people really needed to see it before they could believe it. Reading research, reading articles, for some people that was enough to say, "Good. Let's go, let's try it." Some people on our team said, "I've read all that and I'll do it, but I don't know if I believe. I want to see it in action. I need to see it happening, be successful, before I'm going to change my belief system."

> Second grade teacher: I have to tell you that when they first started, and I saw what they could do, I thought, "This will never work," because they aren't doing anything my children are doing. And then I started our mornings with big books, and they would sit on the floor with the children and Randy got very involved. He loved to look at the pictures so he was very quiet.... Then one day they were in my class for a math lesson ... and I said, "Is there anyone who would like to come to the board now?" And Randy's hand went up, so [the support teacher] went up to the board with him and said, "OK, now this is what we're going to do." And he loved it.... Up to that point I thought they would be sitting in the room but they wouldn't be doing anything because they can't do anything.... And [the support teacher] was saying, " Well now how can we get them involved in the group? What could we do? What could they do?" So then we looked at what my day looked like and how they could be included.

As adults developed and modelled this expectation, so did students.

> First grade teacher: One time we went to [a nature center] and of course we had Mark and Sara with us, and everyone in the whole class had a chance to be in a pond and they all got to be different creatures in a pond, and they were talking about being predators and stuff like that. And Mark and Sara were not involved because the person who was doing the presentation did not think to include them. And I remember the children coming to me one after another and saying, "Can't Mark play? Can't Sara play?"... And when we got back [to school], it was just top on their minds. That's all they wanted to talk about. They were hurt because [Mark and Sara] were left out.

> Second/fourth grade teacher: We're planning a really big trip to Albany.... You leave at 6 in the morning and come home at 6 at night, and [the team asked], "Would this benefit Sara?"... And I said, "It is a really long day, but we better let Sara's mom make that decision as to what she wants to do.... But I'm telling you right now, you tell that class that she's not going, and they're going to want to know why. They're going to want to know what the problem is." And if I said, "We just don't know how much Sara would get out of it," they'd ask, "What do you mean?"

Factors that seem to promote this expectation include personal beliefs, a school philosophy that the class is a family, availability of supports to make inclusion successful (e.g., planning time, assistance from professionals and paraprofessionals), and greater facility in using strategies to achieve

inclusion (e.g., collaborative problem solving). While teachers express a strong commitment to inclusion, it is clear that degree of inclusion is a sensitive topic. Teachers do not want to be pushed into an all-or-nothing position; they want to continue to use judgement about when and how students should be included or removed from activities.

> Kindergarten/first grade teacher: They should be there as much as they possibly can. And if they can't be there, it's either a medical problem, a problem where they're really disrupting the classroom and learning can't take place, or that maybe things that we're doing in the classroom are not totally appropriate.... I'm more comfortable with that than I was.... I thought, If they can't be in here then it's my fault." Now I've seen, through the years ... there are times when they can't be there, when it's more appropriate for them to be in a different place....
>
> Support teacher for kindergarten & first grade: And I also think learning takes place in different environments. For instance, Kelly really needs to use the bathroom because that's the bathroom she's going to be using in second and third and fourth grade, and learning to use the drinking fountain. She needs to be taken out of the room at times, so we made going to the bathroom and getting a drink all one activity.... That all children will be included, yes, but I still feel there is partial participation, and there are times when something may be going on in the classroom, that I don't want to water it down, or I don't want to artificially make it fit.... When they're doing reading, having Kelly sit and self-stim with the pages of the book, just to say she's sitting.... We can't include kids just to say they were being included and sacrifice good teaching and their goals.

Part of the discomfort seems related to the varying ways teachers define inclusion. Some teachers seem to believe that adapting expectations, curriculum, and materials is not consistent with inclusion.

> First grade teacher: I can't see Kelly participating in any of the activities we do in here. It's mostly something that's different from what we do. Which isn't to say I don't think she belongs in the classroom, but I don't see force fitting her into activities that most six-year-olds are doing.

During two observations in Kelly's first grade classroom, she was seen both fully included and removed from the classroom. During an opening circle, children sang and signed songs. Sitting in the circle and wearing headphones, Kelly was prompted to turn on a tape recorder and to hold the recorder on her lap with her hands on the speaker. Although she was restless and required continual guidance, she appeared to be part of the group and not disruptive. After about 15 minutes, Kelly left the classroom (to go to the bathroom and nurse), which everyone seemed to take in stride. Later, students worked at four stations. Three involved academic tasks; one had a variety of toys for fine motor activities. Kelly was assisted to use several toys at the last station, but seemed to reject toys in quick succession. After a few minutes, she was taken to work in the hall, where she was encouraged to participate in

gross motor activities. Kelly's teachers reported that earlier in the year they had insisted Kelly work with the class, but she screamed continually, which interfered with both Kelly's and the other students' education. During this observation, it appeared that Kelly's team worked to include her in meaningful ways while respecting her activity tolerance, respecting the needs of other students in the class, and addressing Kelly's non-academic needs.

Other teachers also struggle with the appropriate inclusion of students with severe disabilities who are more active and disruptive.

> Second grade teacher: We went through a period where Randy did a lot of screaming. And the kids did much better than I did. And there were times when I would say, "I think Randy needs to go out of the room," because I wanted him to know that that was not acceptable behavior.... But I really wanted them in the room as much as possible.... And there were times when it wasn't appropriate.
>
> Support teacher for second, third, & fourth grade: I think too though that it becomes much more reinforcing for the child to be in the classroom, even if it means it's reinforcing because they disrupt the classroom.... [Jamie] disrupted the class and there was a lot of aggression, and noise and adults talking to kids.... But a consequence for that was that she had to leave the room. And that happened less and less and it became very apparent that she had a need to be in the room.... It got very old being out of the class.... It took a very long time, but it was effective.

In some situations, teachers may have set unrealistic expectations.

> First/fourth grade teacher: Before [inclusion of students with severe disabilities] I knew that in some cases I needed to pull any child aside and deal with a situation privately, or a need privately. what I found myself doing with children with special needs was not what I was doing with other kids. I was trying to include them absolutely across the board in everything. It was almost like I was afraid to pull them out for anything ... and that's not smart.

In most situations, however, teachers seem to have set a goal that they have not yet achieved. Several teachers expressed feelings that they needed to do better with these students; it was their responsibility to find ways to include the students more fully and more successfully. In responses to the inclusion questionnaire, four teachers agreed with the following statement:

> Based on my experience, I expect that children with severe disabilities who are more active and disruptive will participate in fewer inclusive activities and more parallel activities than children with multiple disabilities.

Three teachers disagreed with this statement, but two of the three added comments about the challenges of including these students. Seven out of eight teachers reported that students with severe disabilities were included appropriately most of the day during regular activities, with or without adaptations. One of the seven reported including one student most of the day, but two others little of the day; another teacher reported including students

with severe disabilities some of the day. In interviews, teachers noted that the extent and quality of inclusion increased each year, as the teachers' competence increased.

In contrast, teachers seem to expect or accept that some therapies must be parallel.

> Second & third grade teacher: I think it's different with different needs. Like with Mark and Sara, it's not like they were being disruptive in class and you had to remove them for that reason. I think with them it was harder to get them in there all the time because of OT, PT, and everything else.

> First grade teacher: I'll never forget one year when [a child with mild disabilities] had to do something with either OT or PT, and it was hammering nails into a board. And they're off in the back of the room hammering nails into a piece of wood while I'm teaching a lesson up in the front of the room. And I realized that there are times when it's appropriate for them to be removed from the room.

In interviews, teachers indicated it was common practice for therapists to work in the classrooms, and spoke of the benefits of that practice. During this study, therapists were sometimes observed working with students in the classroom, but often on an activity parallel with the activity of the rest of the class. During other observations, students with severe disabilities were not found with their class because they went for therapy. Questionnaires asked teachers about the extent that students with severe disabilities were included in regular class activities while receiving therapy services. Four teachers reported that students were included <u>most</u> of the time during speech therapy, and that was appropriate, but the other four respondents reported students included <u>some</u> or <u>little</u> of the time for speech therapy, which was too little. For occupational therapy, four teachers reported students included <u>most</u> of the time, four reported <u>some</u> of the time; six said the amount of inclusion was appropriate while one said it was too little, and one didn't respond. For physical therapy, seven teachers reported students included <u>some</u> of the time, one reported <u>little</u>, but five said this amount of inclusion was appropriate while only one said it was too little. (Two did not respond.) In contrast, seven teachers reported including students with severe disabilities <u>most</u> of the day during regular activities.

This range of responses might be explained in a variety of ways. Perhaps teachers are not as clear about how and when therapists can work with them as they are about support teachers. Perhaps there is a mystique about therapy services that deters teachers from raising the same questions about therapy services as they do about education. Interviews suggested that it was the teachers with expertise in special education who initially asked the questions or made the suggestions that resulted in planning progressively more inclusive educational activities. If this was the case, there may be an unspoken expectation that the therapists have, will, or must lead integration of their services. When asked whether she thought it was necessary to have one student hammering nails as therapy separate from the rest of the class, the teacher quoted earlier suggested viable alternatives to pull-out therapy.

First grade teacher: I think there were other things that he could be doing. Or with the age group I'm teaching, if [the student with disabilities] is hammering nails, I bet all the kids would like to do it. So I think that perhaps if there had been better planning, that would be something that we could incorporate into a lesson.... Which makes it nicer for [the student with disabilities] too because then he's not singled out.

As will be discussed in Teams, the therapists have had few opportunities to participate in planning meetings, and therefore the teams have not had the same mechanism to achieve inclusion of therapy services.

Teams

Teams now include regular class teachers, a support (special education) teacher, an occupational therapist, a physical therapist, and a speech therapist. The expanded team benefits all children, not just those with severe disabilities.

Kindergarten teacher: Since I started in this district in 1974, we've always teamed.... It is a definite structure that is part of our school district. What has changed is the people [who are part of the team].

Kindergarten/first grade teacher: We've always had teams as long as I've worked here. But including another person in your team, the special ed teacher, making sure she's always included in every decision that you make, that she has a lot of input, we seem to meet more frequently because she has her concerns too, which are valid.... I think inclusion of that teacher is extremely important in every team meeting that we have, if possible.

Teachers have learned that techniques used in special education can be applied to regular education, and vice versa.

Support teacher for second & third grade: There's a real desire to make plans that include everybody ... looking not only at what can we do to the general curriculum to make it meaningful for the special needs children, but also what are they doing that we might be able to make meaningful for the other kids.... As they're learning cursive, maybe rolling play-dough for example, which might be following directions with objects and a fine motor activity ... and it's still materials that they're really attracted to developmentally.

First/fourth grade teacher: Various people working with the child with special needs come into the classroom if at all possible. Sometimes they'll work with other children too. You've got to get the child they're working directly with in a task and then move around the group, or if we've arranged it ahead of time, we would have the entire class doing a certain thing that the needed task could be embedded in.

The support teacher plans in collaboration with the team and then provides training if needed. When planning, the team keeps individual objectives in mind. Although there are often last minute changes, teachers have become more organized in their advance planning, since support teachers and therapists need this information to plan for students with severe disabilities.

> First grade teacher: I think when you have a handicapped child in your room, you need to be a little more intentional and you need to have a little more of a long-term plan.... Not to say that I'm not as flexible, and not to say that I don't go with a teachable moment. Certainly we do that. But I think we're a little bit more intentional and we plan ahead a little bit more, because we need to sit down with our entire team, including this person who's working with the handicapped child who has several other classrooms to serve as well.

> Second & third grade teacher: If I know what's coming up in the next week or the next two weeks, I'll give [the support teacher] a copy of what's going on, ... and I'll ask her what can we do together.... But then we need more time off by ourselves to do planning for [students with disabilities]. So during our team time, the big team time, it's not hitting these kids directly. It's whole class.

> Support teacher for second, third & fourth grade: There's so much going on with the team itself, that for that team time, it's almost an impossible task to do it all then and there in that 40 minutes or half hour.

Special education teachers are no longer viewed as "magicians," rather they are resources and co-teachers. Regular and support teachers share ownership for all students.

> Kindergarten/first grade teacher: I thought [the support teacher] could take the special ed kids in the afternoon, while they were all self-contained, and wave her magic wand, and they were going to be all fixed in the afternoon. Until I walked in there one afternoon and saw this and thought, "We can do this in the regular classroom just as well as they can do this in a self-contained classroom."

> First/fourth grade teacher: When [support teachers] first came, we looked on them as experts in what we wanted to do at Harry L, and they weren't. They weren't and we weren't. We found that out pretty quickly, and it emphasized the need to think and plan together.... We found out very quickly that if we planned together, we could figure out solutions for everything.

> Support teacher for second, third, & fourth grade: If I can think fast and [come up with a successful strategy], maybe the [classroom] teacher can do that too.... Eventually I can see [a classroom teacher] thinking of [a student with disabilities] while she thinks of the class. But, you know, she doesn't have to call me to get [materials adapted for

the student with disabilities]. She has ideas that she does now.

First grade teacher: With Kelly, I really thought we needed more things in the classroom. Part of the reason she was yelling and screaming was she wasn't finding this a very nice place to be. So I talked with [the support teacher] about it, and brought in a trampoline. It was for the whole class, but really Kelly was the one in mind, because I knew she loved the one in physical therapy.

Support teacher for kindergarten & first grade: If [a teacher was planning] something that was pure lecture, I would say, "Could you do a visual component to that? Because [a student with disabilities] really needs to see it, not just hear it." So I can influence what's going on. And also what we plan is the topics we want to co-teach.... That was really important too, so the kids see us all as teachers.

Second grade teacher: I needed that morning meeting with [the support teacher].... That was the time that, not only could we discuss the children and plan for the children, but it was also the time that I needed a certain amount of stroking, and I got it from [the support teacher]. I think I was hoping that it worked both ways, but I needed to be maybe validated for some of the things I was doing.

Second & third grade teacher: [The support teacher] would come in and take over and teach the class to all the third graders, even if it was math. And it didn't matter. It was something that he could teach or I could teach. It was just both of us co-teaching in the room, so it was never set up as [the support teacher] being here for [the students with disabilities].... And he would teach a whole class, and I would be with [two students with severe disabilities].

Support teacher for kindergarten & first grade: If [a student] is having a problem with [the classroom teacher], I don't want to step in. I mean, that's something that [the teacher and student] need to deal with. So I may take over teaching the whole classroom so [the teacher] can then deal with that problem.

Second/fourth grade teacher: [It's important that] you don't get caught up in role specifications, you know, "Well, this isn't in my job description. I don't have to pick up Sara," or "I don't have to do that," or "I don't have to do this." It's just, you're here to benefit everybody.

During one observation, the first grade teacher was suddenly called away from school. The support teacher came in and took over the class, teaching the math lesson with apparent ease. After introducing the lesson, the support teacher assigned the children work to complete individually, then in small groups. While most children worked independently, the support teacher and the occupational therapist assisted children with disabilities.

Just as support teachers and regular class teachers have become team

mates, teachers now view therapists as team members who can contribute to improving the education of all students.

> First grade teacher: [The therapists] have also added a lot to our teams, because when they come in the room, I won't only ask them about "classified" children. I would also say, "You know I've noticed he's drooling, and he's doing this, and he's doing that." And they'll come in and help out with other children.

Therapists have not been as involved in team planning, primarily because they are responsible to more teams and some are in the building less often. As a result, therapists don't always have a good understanding of class routines and expectations, and teachers don't necessarily understand what the therapist can contribute.

> Second & third grade teacher: When the [occupational therapist and physical therapist] came in, they had their stuff they had to cover in the IEP and sometimes by hit and miss it might go along with what we were doing in the room, but for the most part I'd have to say they just went ahead and did their own work.... If they were there for planning - I don't know how realistic that could be though, logistically.... But I think that would help a great deal if they had an idea where we're going and vice versa. If I had an idea what they had to do, I might plan differently.

> Second grade teacher: I would assume that they plan with the special ed teacher. I had very little to do with anyone, except they always did [therapy] in my room... so the children would not have to leave the room. But I basically had nothing to do with it ... possibly because I never really knew what they did.

> Second & third grade teacher: If Sara was having [therapy] or Mark was having [therapy] in the back of the room, and I'd go back there, [the occupational therapist] was very good at telling me, "This is what I'm doing right now."... Because sometimes you look at them and wonder, "Why are you doing that to that child?"

Teachers believe the therapists are interested in sharing information, but logistics often interfere.

> Kindergarten/first grade teacher. They're really very open with us when we have any questions, and we feel free to ask them. You know, what are they doing? What are things for? How long should they have them on? [Their input is] also through [the support teacher]. It's whoever they catch first.

> First grade teacher: The special area people are pulled in different directions, because they're not only working with our team. We're going to meet with them once a month to come up with more specific activities. You know, IEPs are nice, but what do we do on a daily basis in the classroom? So I think we need to meet more with them, and also

> just get written notes. You know, nothing formal. Like [the occupational therapist] will sometimes stick notes in my mailbox about what to do with Ben. That helps a lot. Because, even though some of the therapies are done in the classroom, other times they're removed for certain parts of the therapy. And really, once the kids go out the door, we don't know what's going on with them.

In some classes, therapists are starting to participate regularly in planning and/or team teaching.

> Support teacher for second & third grade: The speech therapist this year is assigned to a team, so our speech therapist does meet with us every day at our team planning time, and that's been real beneficial. It helps just to coordinate all the activities. Physical therapists and occupational therapists I see routinely, but we really have to set times to try to meet ... usually on Thursday mornings.

> Kindergarten teacher: Now our occupational therapist comes in on Thursday afternoon and takes half the class and I take half the class and do an activity. And we flip-flop so she'd including everybody in the therapy for [a student with a disability].

> Kindergarten/first grade teacher: We have a new speech therapist working with us this year. And she and [the support teacher] have worked things out so that [the speech therapist] is coming in and doing a block of time in the morning with the children. So [the speech therapist] is coming in more often to find out what we're doing and where she'll fit in.

Teachers think this area needs improvement, either by including therapists in team planning on a reduced schedule and/or by support teachers communicating more extensively with therapists.

> Support teacher for kindergarten & first grade: We're trying to meet at least once a month with the full team, aides and teachers, everyone getting together with the therapists.... Because they're only here twice a week, those days fill up very quickly.

> Kindergarten/first grade teacher: We set one [meeting that includes related services] for once a month, which is not often enough, but they're not here a lot. So we kind of have to work around their schedule.... and to have them on every team would be really hard for them.

In response to the inclusion questionnaire, teachers indicated that classroom and support teachers should plan together 3 to 5 times a week, which is already typical for the classroom teachers, but a slight increase for support teachers. Respondents indicated that speech therapists typically plan with their team about once a month, but once a week is desired. Occupational and physical therapists typically plan with their team once a month or not at all, and once a week is desired. During May, meetings of two teams were

observed. A kindergarten-first grade team was planning a picnic for their classes. The support teacher did not attend this meeting, but other teachers noted that often there was discussion of students with disabilities when she attended, and in relation to the picnic, her input regarding participation by students with disabilities would be desirable. A third-fourth grade team, including their support teacher, had a varied agenda that included class lists for students transitioning to middle school. This continued discussion from prior team meetings in which teachers proposed class lists with heterogeneous groups that reflected what teachers know about relationships between and manageability of certain pairs of students. Although neither team planned specific instruction during these meetings, the importance of the support teachers to influence the discussions was evident. No related services staff attended either meeting.

Teachers also recognize the aides as essential members of their teams, who make a tremendous difference in whether the children and other staff are successful in their efforts.

> First grade teacher: You have to have a good aide, somebody that deals well with the children.... And when you have aides in the room, you know they're there primarily for the handicapped children, but they're also willing to look after other children and help them too.

Teachers also recognize that parents are important members of their child's team.

> Kindergarten teacher: We have a notebook that goes back and forth with Mary every day.... I wish I could do that with all kids.... I call my parents more than write.... I've always called to keep in touch, because we're working together for their child. I can't do it by myself. I need their help at home and we need to work together. And I think the same is true with the special needs kids.

> First grade teacher: Kelly's mom told us she could walk down the stairs by herself, at her IEP meeting. And we all thought, "No way!" And we realized she could do it. So we're learning from the children's parents also.

The relationship between teachers and parents varies. In some cases, the support teacher is the primary correspondent with the parents; in other cases it is the classroom teacher.

> First grade teacher: [The support teacher] tends to be the one to write to [students with severe disabilities'] parents rather than myself.... And the notes mainly come addressed to [the support teacher].... The communication between the regular class teacher and the parents of the kids with special needs could be strengthened in some way, so that they really do see us as their child's teacher and not just the special ed teacher is their child's teacher.

> Second/third grade teacher: We work much more closely with the

> parents of children with special needs, because it's an all-encompassing kind of thing. You write in their book at night.... It makes you look from a parent's perspective, though, even for the children in your classroom that don't have special needs.... And I think we should have that kind of communication with the parents for all kids.

Consistent with their expectation that students with severe disabilities will be included in regular class activities, the teachers want parents to see their children as integral members of the class. The teachers also want parents of children with severe disabilities to participate in inclusive school activities.

> Support to kindergarten & first grade: I got together with parents of children with special needs and without, a group of heterogeneously mixed parents....We did t-shirt painting and then we had both kindergarten classes come together and we had a big picnic. And we had parents there because I thought that parents needed to have that support. Parents needed to see how their children interact, and they don't always get that opportunity during school. So our t-shirt painting was at night, and we had a wonderful time. And then the picnic was during the day, but we gave the parents weeks notice so they could plan.

Teachers and parents also formed a Circles of Friends Club to address the needs of students who had friends at school but few if any social contacts on weekends. Eventually run by parents, the group grew from 35 to 75 children who participated in weekend recreational activities, including a dance and a camping trip.

Student Assessment and IEPs

The special education teacher, rather than the regular class teacher, has primary responsibility for formalized assessment of students with severe disabilities. The school is starting to use an "arena" approach to assessment (Bailey & Wolery, 1989) in which several people assess the student together.

> Support teacher for kindergarten & first grade: Usually it's been the OT, PT, [special education teacher], speech, and depending on when it's being done, there's sometimes a classroom teacher. We might call a parent in.... Sometimes it would be appropriate [to involve the classroom teacher] but getting substitutes or trying to get coverage is sometimes really hard.

Although formal assessment of students with disabilities is usually considered a "specialist" role, one teacher took it upon herself to conduct a formal assessment using a standardized tool.

> Support teacher for second, third, & fourth grade: [The second & third grade teacher] wanted a student tested, and I think she got a bit frustrated about it not getting done. So she went to [the assistant principal's] office and got the test and gave it herself.... I don't know how effective it was, but she took on the responsibility of this

thing she hadn't done before, ... and she immediately demystified this test.... And now when someone says "the [test name]," it's not this magical thing. It's this hour long test that she doesn't like.

Second & third grade teacher: We were getting nowhere; it was taking too long, so I went ahead and gave him the math part of it. And that was a good chance for me to see [the process] because you send these files down and say, "Can you please assess this child?" And they come back with this little write-up on him, but you don't really know what went on.

In general, the school is moving away from formal testing. The regular class teachers assess students primarily through an approach they call "kid watching." The teachers find that the kid watching they do with the rest of their class is also appropriate for students with severe disabilities, and kid watching has direct relevance to the IEP.

First/fourth grade teacher: We have our units written with standards of performance, very specific standards, so we know what to watch for.... What we're watching for may be different because of the child's IEP, or because of changes or adaptations in that child's curriculum or materials.... We watch for [our five exit outcomes] with all kids at all times. But then within a certain academic area or unit or lesson, we have very specific things that we're kid watching for. And we keep track of those on checklists and writing on our hands or whatever.

First grade teacher A: There are times when I'm watching for specific things. For example, when the class is reading to me, I'll look to see if they are pointing, or if they're with me, and things like that. And then there's more informal kid watching where I'll watch them during break and snack time, or when they first come in in the morning, where I'll watch to see just how they interact with each other. [A project coordinator] will ask me, "Well, are the kids approaching Kelly? Are they doing things with her?" And it's something I document.

Kindergarten teacher: [Assessment] is ongoing.... Right now, I'm not getting a "yes" and "no" consistently with Mary's eyes up, so I need to know if they're getting it at [her residential program]. And I need to know if there is another thing we need to work on first.... So I need to notice those kinds of things.... And when we sit down and do the IEPs, then you have to know what their goals are. Otherwise you don't know what you're working on.

First grade teacher B: We do a lot of assessment with checklists now. We do very little with formal tests. So when I'm doing an assessment with the kids, like my money unit, I'll put the coins out in front of the children. "Find the dime. Find the nickel. Find the penny. Find the quarter." And then I'll ask the children, "How much is the dime worth? ... the penny? ... the quarter?" ... I'm very comfortable now modifying the assessment if I need to. For example, if

I had [a student with moderate disabilities], I would be very comfortable having her pick out the pennies and the nickels.... And [the support teacher and I] would adapt the report card. I think we did a really good job, sitting down for maybe 10 or 15 minutes, it didn't take long, and just write the report card together. We both signed it, which I think was nice for the parents to see that we're working together with their child. And it meant a lot to the child to bring home a report card with everyone else.... Then at the end of the year, with [the support teacher], when they were looking at the IEPs to see what goals had been met, that was something that I took part in also. It's exciting to be a part of it. And it's nice to have that knowledge base.

The regular class teachers are active participants in developing IEPs for children with severe disabilities. Knowing the IEPs allows the regular class teachers to understand the student's goals, better adapt curriculum to meet goals, and take more ownership for the children. There has been a definite evolution in the process.

Kindergarten/first grade teacher: Originally we weren't included [in IEP planning meetings] and I kept saying, "Well, what are you doing? I want to see what you're doing. Why are you doing this? And what does this mean for my classroom?" And then they started including me in it. I think that's really important for all regular educators to sit in on that meeting. They have the parents there, the OT, the PT, the speech therapist, everybody that's involved with the child. And we go over all their IEP goals, what they'd like to see. And I think every regular educator should do that, even though it takes time out of your day, you still need to do that.

First grade teacher: The first year or two we had children with handicapping conditions in the room, I had no clue of what the IEPs were. And then starting with that third year, I would sit down with [the support teacher] and talk with her, and actually have a say in what the IEPs were. And [we] would talk about what the expectations were for the typical children in first grade, and then we would talk about the child [with disabilities] and what the expectations would be for that child. And so I actually had a say in the writing of the IEPs, and also with the OT and PT and speech, if they were involved. And that helped me tremendously when it came to working with the children, if the special ed teacher wasn't available and there was a last minute change to be made. You know, if I looked at what I had planned for the children and said, "Oh my gosh, [this child] shouldn't be doing this paper! I can see him getting frustrated." I would be very comfortable making an adaptation because I had the knowledge base, ... and then I would tell the special ed teacher later on, "This is what happened, and this is how I handled it," and get the feedback from her. But I felt comfortable making that decision without saying, "Oh my gosh. I've got to go talk to [the support teacher] before I can do this." ... You can't just have a paper bag over your head and wonder why this is happening with this child.

The regular class teachers are no longer just curious about the IEP; they see their involvement as essential if the students' needs are to be met.

> First/fourth grade teacher: I told each of the special ed teachers that I'd like to be involved in [IEP planning], because they're not in here all day, and I am. And there are things I have kid watched for and I can enlarge on. In some cases, especially where something on the IEP needs to be changed, I have more information than the special ed teacher does, and it's very helpful to be in on those discussions. And then we get copies of the IEP, so we are a part of that process.

> First grade teacher: As the classroom teacher, you see different things and different needs. And you also know your specific curriculum a little better than the special ed teacher might.... [For example], the occupational therapist asked, "Do you think Ben will be able to write his name?" and I really felt that no, this was kind of unrealistic for him this year. And it was respected, so I feel I actively participated.

Teachers at Harry L School have made a concerted effort to develop an IEP process that satisfies all "stakeholders." Early in the process an important aspect is the input of all team members. A later part of their process involves developing a matrix showing the relationship between students' IEP objectives and their daily schedule (see Figure 1). When the school district formed a committee to examine the IEP process, teachers from Harry L became actively involved, sharing the results of their efforts.

> Second & third grade teacher: I really like the way [a support teacher] does [IEP planning]. He has the parents in, sits them down, and you have an hour or an hour and a half. You write all the [child's] strengths on the board, what their weaknesses are, and where you want to see them go.... It takes a long time to sit down and do an IEP with a parent and a teacher and all the support staff, ... [but] then you have an idea of what your supposed to be teaching during the year.

> Kindergarten/first grade teacher: I've sat in on a couple meetings on rewriting the IEP ... and advising them to make it friendly to regular educators. And I really think they're doing a good job on that. We keep the IEP where it is so that we know what we're doing, where we can fit in activities for the children.... So I think the matrix would fit in really well.

> Support teacher for second, third, & fourth grade: The danger is that ... there won't be much attention to [the IEP during the regular class activities].... I don't envision having [an IEP] in the classroom. I envision having a working document from an IEP, like this matrix. This is much easier to look at when things are going to be done. This is just something that's workable.

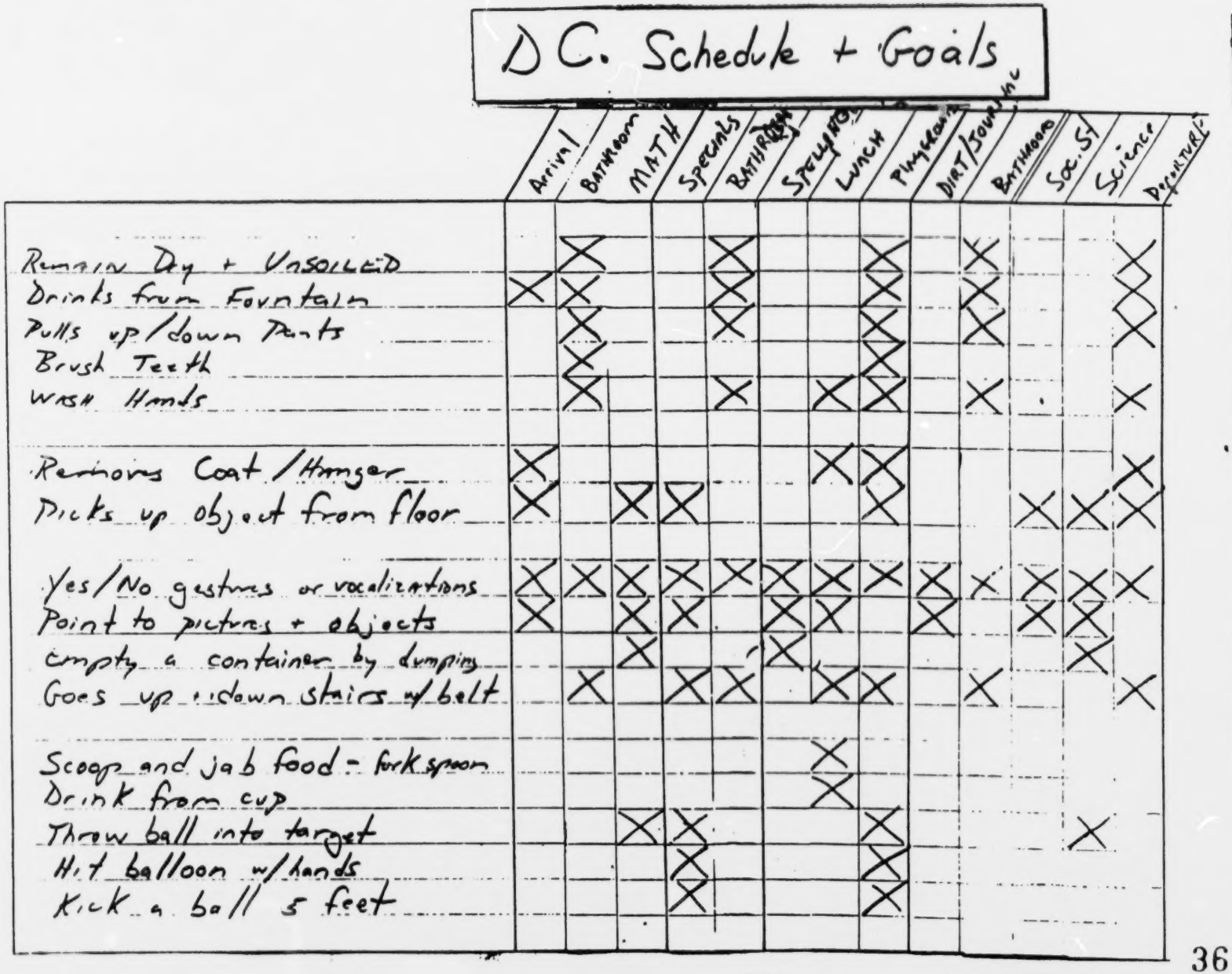

Figure 1. Matrix of a student's IEP objectives and daily schedule.

As their IEP process evolves, regular class teachers are less accepting of continued traditional approaches. For several years, the school has housed a program for students with hearing impairments, administered by another education agency. These students are mainstreamed into regular classes, but their inclusion has not progressed at the same rate as for other students with disabilities. Regular class teachers were troubled by the resulting discrepancies in a variety of areas, including the IEP process.

> Second grade teacher: At the beginning of the year [when I had students with severe disabilities], I sat in on the IEP meeting where the parent was brought in, and [the support teacher] went through the whole IEP. And we had a discussion, the parent, [the support teacher], and I.... That was very nice, and something that I miss now that I have hearing impaired students.... And I felt more comfortable working with the children [with severe disabilities] ... and I know it's just the way we plan.... I still like the children [with hearing impairments], but it's working differently.

> Second & third grade teacher: This year [with students with hearing impairments] I can't even get my hands on these children's IEPs even to see where they are, whereas last year [with students with severe disabilities], I was involved from the start. So I had a better idea of what their goals were and where they were going.... It's a different way that people handle things, and I don't feel that ownership.

Teachers at Harry L recognize that there are multiple strategies for achieving the same outcome. When they devise strategies that produce more successful outcomes, however, the teachers try to share their experiences so others can enjoy similar success. They are understandably frustrated when individuals or systems do not recognize the need for collaboration to maximize student benefit.

Flexibility

Teachers have found that they need to be flexible to effectively include students with severe disabilities in regular classroom activities. For some teachers this flexibility was a change, but one they welcomed.

> Kindergarten/first grade teacher: I think you have to be much more flexible and field problems when they come up.... You know, somebody will drop down and have a seizure, or somebody will have to be removed from the room. And you have to be flexible enough to deal with that kind of thing.

> Second & third grade teacher: The whole structure of the classroom, that you have children that are in wheelchairs, but you want to put them on the standing board. What kind of lesson can you offer them that can include them and do that? You can sit there and fill up the planbook with all these ideas, but then when it comes time to do it, ... you see it's not going to work. Well, you're not going to go with it. You're just going to try something else. And that's why the

planbook is never in ink.

> Second/fourth grade teacher: I came in as a very structured brand new teacher, thinking that everything had to happen, like from 8:10 to 8:30, we had to do this and we couldn't run over.
>
> First grade teacher: If Kelly is doing something that I think is really positive, I'd rather stress it and call the kids attention to it and stop what I'm doing for a minute. Or if we don't have materials available for Ben right then, lot's of times it might be a scramble.... So I think you have to be more flexible.

Teachers feel like having students with severe disabilities in their classes has given them "permission" to be more flexible, which has enabled them to adopt a teaching style, create a classroom structure, and design activities that are more successful for all children.

> First grade teacher: I've also done a lot with working with smaller groups of children now. I'll repeat a lesson three times and teach it to smaller groups, rather than do it to the whole class.... And in the small group I can meet the individual needs of the children, which six years ago I wouldn't have had any idea how to do. And I think a lot of that comes from having worked with handicapped kids.... I'm more comfortable letting the children take the initiative. I'm more comfortable letting the children do more. I'm more comfortable with active participation, getting up, walking around the room, helping each other. I don't think I did much at all with peer tutoring until after I had handicapped children. And now it's just a standard....
>
> I'm very much more comfortable with the higher noise level.... I taught in [another] school for four years and the principal would come in and the children were expected to have their hands folded on the desk and paying total attention to the teacher while the teacher lectured for most of the day.... And when I first started substituting here, of course I thought, "Oh my gosh! This noise level is too high!" And [the principal] came in and watched a lesson and said, "Well look at what you're doing and look at what they're talking about. It's all on task. That's active learning."

Because the students with severe disabilities require an array of supports and special services, there are more adults in classrooms than typically found in an elementary school. Although most teachers found this a little challenging, individual teachers have adapted and teams have worked to use all personnel effectively.

> Support teacher for second & third grade: There was concern for the kids and there was concern about having the aides in the room, and all the other people that end up coming in and out of a classroom when you're working with children that have these needs. Having physical therapists, occupational therapists, speech therapists in and out throughout the day is.... Well, I know the school is used to a lot of visitors, but still, on a daily basis to be up there trying to focus

> attention on the lesson, and having the door open and close, and having so many people come in and out was a concern that they had. And the kids seemed to get used to that very quickly, and when the student response is positive, then the teachers really seemed to be comfortable with it. And I think once you get to know each other and feel comfortable and uninhibited teaching in front of one another, then it becomes even more fun. Because there's a lot of opportunity to share in that whole teaching experience.

Because team members have adopted flexible roles and a team structure in which special education teachers and therapists work alongside classroom teachers, the classroom teachers expand their competence. Many teachers are comfortable planning and trying out strategies with students with severe disabilities without guidance from the "specialists" on their teams.

> Kindergarten teacher: [Visitors] are so concerned about the little things, diaper changing and all that piddly stuff, that they miss the big picture is that I am not fearful. That if the aide walks out... or if [the support teacher] is not here, I can feel I know what to do.

> Support teacher for second, third, & fourth grade: There's still a lot going on when I'm not around or not able to see things the teacher is doing with kids, with all kids.... It's not, "Where's [the support teacher]? I have to wait for this person." People aren't waiting for someone to tell them it's right. They're trying it out. That doesn't mean it's always good, but it's neat, because then they share information and they're the ones who are responsible for those students.

Flexibility in roles, learning environments, and teaching strategies does not seem to be entirely new at Harry L, but teachers credited the inclusion of students with severe disabilities for demanding types and degrees of flexibility they had not previously achieved.

Let it Go

Teachers carefully consider the relative importance of the various demands they place on students, based partly on the way students respond to those demands. Having students with severe disabilities in the class has helped put more minor problems in perspective.

> Second/fourth grade teacher: I can remember in my first month of teaching, if somebody didn't have a pencil ... spending five minutes with, " Why don't you have a pencil? I'm not going to get you one. It was your responsibility."... Why did I spend ten minutes over not having a notebook or not having a pencil and getting all upset about that and missing ten minutes of instruction, and dwelling on that? It really puts in perspective what's major and what's minor.

Teachers are also more likely to stand back and let others work things out on their own, including how to meet immediate needs of the students with severe disabilities.

First grade teacher: Mark was way in the back row and he had a coughing spell. And there were two classes [in the room for story time], so there were about fifty kids out there. And I thought to myself, "Well, what am I going to do? How am I going to get all the way back to him without stepping over twenty kids?" And the little boy sitting next to him just very nonchalantly sat him up. When Mark was finished coughing, he wiped his face, put the cloth back down, sat Mark back in the seat, and turned around without even batting an eyelash.

First grade teacher: We have two aides in the morning, and the one aide leaves at 11:00, so we have 20 minutes of panic time. And I guess Kelly started screaming ... and [the remaining aide] said the screaming stopped all of a sudden. And she came out and there was another child stroking Kelly's back and calming her down.... It was totally natural. [The other child] saw there was a need and she stepped in and took care of it.

Teachers are learning to accept, ignore, and/or overlook challenges that some students present that are not easily resolved, but can interfere with instruction. They are also learning that temporarily changing their expectations may be the most constructive approach for a child who presents persistent problem behavior.

Second grade teacher: Jamie came to visit this morning.... Apparently what was going on in [fourth grade] was not satisfying her. She was out in the hall, and occasionally she'll come in the room. And I was talking to [Jamie's aide], and I said, "She really likes it in this classroom." And [the aide] said, "Well they're moving around, there's some noise, and she can kind of sit down and look." So I said, "As long as she doesn't pull my hair." She does that occasionally. And [the aide] said, "No, she's really in a good mood today and she won't." And [Jamie] gave me a big hug, and then she sat around to see what else was going on.

First grade teacher A: We are having a very frustrating year this year.... [Compared with last year] it has gotten somewhat better. Kelly screams less.

Support teacher for kindergarten & first grade: Yes, she is screaming less, but when she screams, the intensity seems to be worse.

First grade teacher B: But the kids have gotten used to it now. I'm used to it too now. Like in my room, they don't know Kelly, and now it doesn't make any difference to them when she walks back and forth....

Support teacher for second, third & fourth grade: I think that there are behaviors that are disruptive, aggressive, that are significant enough to really throw a classroom off of what they're doing. I think there are students that have those behaviors, and we're going to have to decide whether we want them in our school or not. I think we've chosen to say, "Yes, we do want them here." But that still leaves that difficulty of saying how much is it going to throw that classroom off? How much benefit are all people going to get from having that student here?...

First grade teacher A: I think part of my frustration at the beginning of the year was that we were doing Kelly more harm than good because our expectations were too high. I think she was being faced with confrontations by myself, or [the support teacher], or the aides, over and over and over again during the day, and that's why she was screaming so much more. Well, now we've lowered our expectations, so she sits and listens to a tape recorder.

Support teacher for kindergarten & first grade: I'm looking at it saying, "What are we teaching her?" These are her goals (gesturing to IEP). These are things that her team really feels like she should accomplish with her. The screaming is less, but then we're weighing feeling comfortable about school against skill acquisition.

First/fourth grade teacher: What were you accomplishing before?

Support teacher for kindergarten/first grade: Right. That's why we backed off. Because before we had her actively involved in programming all day, but the screaming escalated and became worse. So we backed off....

First grade teacher A: We basically decided the main goal for Kelly this year would be to get her to somewhat like coming [to school]. And the other day, when her mother brought her in, she left her mother willingly.

An observation in another first grade classroom revealed unusual tolerance for the behavior of a child with severe emotional and behavior problems who, in the fall, was often violent. During this observation, in April, the teacher persists with asking Alicia to join in the class routine, but overlooks considerable "noncompliance" that doesn't really cause problems. The other children's behavior reflects the teacher's attention to problem solving, attitude of acceptance, and philosophy that the class is a family.

The class has just returned from art, and Alicia appears bubbly and happy. The teacher instructs the children to sit at their tables, but Alicia stands at a counter playing with sticks tied in sets of ten.
Teacher: OK get out your calendar. Alicia, we'll do that in a minute.
Alicia continues. A child goes to the calendar in the front of the room to count and put up the next date. Alicia dances to the calendar, talks, and plays with materials. When she starts to locate today's date, the teacher reminds her it's the other child's turn. The teacher continues her lesson and then instructs everyone to write today's date on their calendar. No one seems particularly concerned by Alicia.
Todd (child with moderate disability): I don't have a pencil.
Teacher: If you don't have one, what do you do?
Todd: Get one.
Teacher: Go ahead.
Todd starts to get up, but other children offer him a pencil.
Alicia sharpens her pencil, and sharpens it, and sharpens it.
Teacher: Quick!
Alicia continues sharpening her pencil.
Teacher: Alicia, now please! We can't hear when you're sharpening.
Alicia sits and starts working.
Todd: I don't know how to write ten.

Teacher: I'll write it for you.
Another child helps Todd. The teacher instructs the class to make a greeting card, and everyone gets to work. Alicia is at her seat, but seems to be cleaning her desk out. The teacher stands nearby.
Teacher: Alicia, are you doing your job?
Alicia: I'm trying to do something! (She frowns and seems increasingly agitated.) I can't do it!
Teacher: You can try. Everyone else did.
Alicia: I can't do it!
Teacher: Then you won't have a card.
The teacher calmly walks away and helps other children. Alicia still looks unhappy, but starts working on her card. A few minutes later the support teacher arrives and Alicia happily shows her card. The support teacher encourages her and moves on to help others. There was no further mention of Alicia's prior behavior, and if the two teachers discussed it, the discussion was too subtle for the observer to discern.

Later, the teacher commented on this situation.

Kindergarten/first grade teacher: You just learn to ignore that, to go on, to deal with that the best you can. If you deal with it the best you can, the kids are going to deal with it.

As teachers learn to deal with a variety of new challenges, there has also been a shift in concerns from day-to-day management issues to other themes discussed in this paper.

Second & third grade teacher: [Visitors] say the craziest things, like they come in and they say, "Do you change her diaper right here in the classroom?" And I think, "Why are you looking at things like that? Look at the wonderful things we're doing here. Ask me questions. I mean, you're worrying about her diaper?!"

Second/fourth grade teacher: Or "Are you responsible for feeding her or giving her snack, or do you have to pick her up ever? Do you have to touch her?"

Kindergarten/first grade teacher: And those are the fears that [support teacher] and I had the first year.

First/fourth grade teacher: And those are the questions that we asked?

Kindergarten/first grade teacher: That's right! Exactly! We met in August and I found out I was going to have Mark and Sara. I had eight kids with disabilities that year in kindergarten, eight in one classroom. And that was one of the first things I said. "Am I going to have to change diapers? Who is going to feed these kids?" I was petrified about those kinds of things. And these are what people are asking us.

First/fourth grade teacher: We started out at that level years ago, and we still get the screaming meemies sometimes and sometimes we fight. We really do. We don't always agree. But our discussions and our arguments are at a much higher level than they were when we started.

It seemed that teachers have been able to "let go" of these issues because they were able to resolve the issues in reasonable ways, or because they realized and accepted that some situations were beyond their control and not a good use of their energy.

Stress

In the questionnaire on inclusion, respondents reported that, at various times during the past five years, they have experienced ongoing stress due to a variety of factors related to including students with severe disabilities in regular classes. During interviews, teachers reported particular concern about the school's initial efforts at inclusion.

> Support teacher for kindergarten & first grade: The first year... we had three students in wheelchairs, plus other children who had all different kinds of needs, and there was only myself and a special ed aide. And sometimes it was just impossible for us to have one child at each table. We would group them all together just because we didn't have enough hands to go around. Now that we have more adults, ... a child with special needs can be at a table with all his friends.... There were six or seven students with severe needs in kindergarten, ... and I had no planning period, no lunch.... [The kindergarten teacher] was doing all the planning and I would go in and I would just look at what she was doing.... There were many times I had no idea what was going on ... scrambling to come up with even partial participation activities or small group. And now what a difference have we made. I feel more a part of what's going on.

> First grade teacher: I had too heavy a load that first year. I think I had five [students with severe disabilities]. I said we learned by our mistakes, ... and that was one of our big mistakes. It was not a good proportion of handicapped children to typical children. I also had an aide that year who did not do well with the children.... She would say things like, "You can't come and do this with me. You're a bad boy." And that would upset [the student] right back into another desk-throwing incident.... You also need a special ed teacher who's going to work with you. And I had one who did not work with the children, and really chose to ignore the children.... Another big source of stress, which was something I brought on myself, was that I did not feel that I had the knowledge base of what to do. And I think we need to be comfortable sometimes with just following our own instincts.

Teachers were also concerned about having sufficient information about the students with profound and multiple disabilities who were in their classes.

> First grade teacher: I was worried with Mark that he would have some sort of medical emergency and I wouldn't know what to do. But I didn't need to worry about it because the support was always there.

> Second/fourth grade teacher: In the very beginning of second grade, I was afraid to pick Sara up, or stretch her, do range of motion, because she was so rigid, and I was thinking I was going to break

something. But I think in time, that really eases up. I don't really think it's a big deal anymore. Plus, if you have a really good support system, you get the help you need.

Second & third grade teacher: I did get kind of a crash course ... [while] going through their files with [the support teacher]. And when they came in the beginning of the year [I got] explanations about the seizures, what to do, what to look for. And what to do for Mark with the oxygen.... When Mark got the feeding tube put in, ... I was worried that I was going to pull that feeding tube out.... [The support teacher] explained how long the tube was inside him, how hard it would be to come out, what to do, how to hold him instead so you wouldn't press on the tube. I think there needs to be more of that.

Although the teachers would like more information and preparation, they also express confidence in getting information and in using their own judgement.

Some students with severe disabilities present significant behavioral challenges that are not easily resolved or overlooked. Generally teachers agreed that it was more stressful to include these students than students with profound and multiple disabilities.

Kindergarten/first grade teacher: [Some children with severe disabilities] are really easy to deal with. But you have the children that are screaming and running and that are extremely disruptive, that's hard on a day-to-day basis. I guess there's frustration too when you ask for help with these kinds of children, and you really don't have any kind of follow up on that.... Even the special educator needs help and is not getting it.... Having other people in the room, ... teaching a lesson and it all goes out the window because somebody has a seizure, you learn to deal with those things. It's manageable. But it's stressful when you don't really know what to do.

Support teacher for kindergarten and first grade: Lack of space [is a problem]. For instance, when Kelly screams, ... she needs to be removed from the classroom... because that seriously interferes with what's going on. And there was no place to bring her. I have a space, but I share it with OT and PT, so there were always people in there. So I would bring Kelly in there and she would still be screaming, and they were like, "Well, what do we do?"

First grade teacher: Today is one of [Kelly's] more difficult days, and we're down personnel today, so it's been kind of difficult covering people. [Another student] who is less severely impaired, tends to lose out on days when [Kelly] is off, because somebody has to go with Kelly, and then there's Ben to deal with. And [the student with mild disabilities] behavior is not difficult to deal with, but then he loses out academically in order for us to deal with the behavior problems.... I think each day brings a new set of things to deal with.

Support teacher for second, third, & fourth grade: [Changing a

student's behavior] can take a long time. I know very well from Jamie with her shoes off every five minutes that year. I was ready to pack it in.... But for all those cases and kids, I can think about positive change. And it took a lot of our patience cells away.

Other potential sources of stress include the need to work with a team, to accommodate ever-changing groups of adults in the classroom, and to accommodate to plans that change at the last minute.

Kindergarten/first grade teacher: You have a lot of people in the room. That was one of my things that I had a lot of trouble with the first couple years, because I had never had anyone in the room except for me and maybe an aide half an hour a day.... You have OT, and you have PT, and you have speech, and you have a special education teacher, and you have your aides, and you have all those other people. And so that's tough getting used to. I guess we tried to work it out so that not everybody was in there at the same time.... I found that very stressful the first couple years, because I'm really basically a very solitary person. And so having all those people in there watching me was really hard.... And you do have to resolve it.

First/fourth grade teacher: [Having a student with severe disabilities in my class] made it more complicated for me because I was needing to team closely with another person, and in some cases the team helped with that by covering the class, or taking part of the class to give us planning time.... I have to anticipate anything I'm going to need to know in the planning session, because that teacher is not always going to be in here.... But for every time I'm without needed help from support personnel, there are times when those people are in here working with somebody else ... [which is] positive for the entire class....

First grade teacher: If we need [materials adapted], I'm not to the point that I will always think of it ahead of time because I still rely on [the support teacher] to do a lot of that stuff. So if we don't meet, that can cause stress in the classroom. So we do meet a lot more. And sometimes I'm tired of meeting and I don't want to meet and I just want to be in my classroom....

Support teacher for second & third grade: People are always trying to do a lot of new things. And curriculum itself is often being developed almost an hour before we're teaching it. And [it's stressful] for that reason, just to do it generally, and then to do it inclusively adds another factor to consider.

Support teacher for second, third, & fourth grade: In the amount of time in the day to change and adapt things, it's really hard to adapt for all kids. And there are still teachers who ... are planning the day before they teach, or in the morning for the afternoon. And that kind of leaves you in a place where you say, "Which is worse? [Not adapting] or seat of the pants adaptation."

Even while teachers discussed ways that inclusion was stressful, they expressed commitment to their school reform activities, such as including students with severe disabilities in regular classes.

> Kindergarten teacher: I think when you talk about teacher burnout, you're talking about teachers who do the same thing day after day after day.... We never do the same thing here. Every year is a new challenge.
>
> Second & third grade teacher: It's more work, but if it's something you like, I don't think it's a stress.
>
> First/fourth grade teacher: We would very often say, "This is disruptive to my class." A lot of things that happened weren't that disruptive, were not disrupting learning on the part of the class.... We've learned to discern ... if it's disruptive to the group and the learning process, or if it's just us.
>
> You have to look at a new situation, something that's causing conflict, as positive, because the way we learn is because something's not working. It needs to be changed. And there is conflict or stress and then you move to a higher thinking level. And that's what we've done with our special ed model. There are some stressors that we're still working on. But some of the stressors that are inherent in having children with special needs just simply took us to a higher thinking level, and they are no longer stressors.

Accountability

Harry L School has an ethic of teachers continually learning, growing, and evaluating their practices. While that ethic undoubtedly set a backdrop for successfully including students with severe disabilities, teachers have consistently approached the associated challenges as opportunities for further growth. This paper is comprised largely of examples of how teachers have reflected on and demonstrated accountability for their beliefs and practices in relation to inclusion of students with severe disabilities. It appears that these students have stimulated a new wave of reflective practice at Harry L School, which has brought educational benefits to all students and professional benefits to their teachers.

Discussion

This paper presents eleven themes that demonstrate the overwhelmingly positive effects on regular class teachers of fully including students with severe disabilities at Harry L School. Rather than inclusion producing entirely new effects, however, the findings suggest that there was more of an amplification or generalization of attitudes, philosophies, and practices that existed in the school prior to the start of inclusion. In a study of the same school, Salisbury, Palombaro, and Hollowood (1991) identified six characteristics of the school's culture that seem to lay the groundwork for successful inclusion of students with severe disabilities. Thus, the nature of the school before inclusion seems to have predisposed teachers both to

consider this initiative and to ensure its success.

Teachers who participated in Harry L's early efforts toward inclusion told stories of great difficulties. Despite that, the teachers looked for other strategies, created needed supports, and tried again. As they experienced greater success, they looked for even better approaches and increased their conviction. Teachers who joined the faculty more recently recalled their struggles as first year teachers, but seemed to achieve the same success at inclusion relatively quickly, then achieved the same high level of conviction to the principles and practices of inclusion. In many respects, teachers conveyed the adage that "success breeds success." This does not entirely explain their determination during the first two years of inclusion, when some aspects of their approach were ineffective. All the teachers seemed to believe they could overcome the challenges they encountered, and that they would receive the supports they needed to overcome the challenges. It may be that the most fundamental underlying characteristic of an inclusive school is a commitment to provide regular class teachers with the supports they need to make inclusion work, a commitment that must be demonstrated by both special educators and school administrators.

There are two limitations to this study. First, the conclusions are closely tied to perceptions of the eleven teachers who participated in the study. Although triangulation occurred through interviews, questionnaires, direct observation, and review of extant data, teacher report data were considerably more extensive than other data. Furthermore, in a study such as this one, there is danger that teachers will tell the story they believe "authorities" (e.g., researcher, administrator) want to hear. The study was of relatively short duration (5 months), and was not designed to provide true immersion in the environment or sufficient direct observation to corroborate all of the teachers perceptions. The findings of this study are strengthened, however, in that they are highly consistent with the findings of Salisbury, Palombaro, and Hollowood (1991), who were deeply immersed in the school for two years.

The second limitation relates to the generalizability of these findings to other schools. This study examined only one school, which, as Salisbury et al. (1991) noted, has unique features that might not be found in other schools. The findings are consistent with those from studies of ten schools in Vermont (Giangreco, Dennis, Cloninger, Edelman, & Schattman, 1991) and two schools in Minnesota (York, Vandercook, Macdonald, Heise-Neff, & Caughey, 1992). Thus, if characteristics of Harry L School predispose teachers to positive experiences related to inclusion, other schools have assumed the same or equally supportive characteristics. If teacher perception of support is a deciding characteristic, such support could be demonstrated through numerous mechanisms, which could vary with other characteristics of the school and community. As more schools are studied and results disseminated, further comparative analyses may reveal those factors that are crucial for teachers to feel positive about inclusion of students with severe disabilities in regular classes.

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APPENDIX A
LETTER TO PARTICIPANTS

January 2, 1992

Dear Teacher:

Thank you for agreeing to participate in the study, "The Effects of Full Inclusion on Regular Education Teachers." Teachers, including special education teachers, who have had students with severe disabilities in their classes for at least one year are invited to participate.

The study consists of two parts: interviews and direct data collection. There will be four sets of interviews, scheduled as follows:

Large group interview (icebreaker)	January 21,	1:00 to 4:00 PM
Individual interviews (elaboration)	February	to
Individual interviews (elaboration)	March	be
Large group interview (wrap up)	April	scheduled

For participation, attendance at all four interviews is desired. Substitute teachers will be provided so the large group interviews can be scheduled during work hours. The shorter individual interviews, about one hour, will be scheduled for the end of the day. What we learn in the interviews will determine what type of data we collect, e.g., if you tell us donut consumption has increased as a result of inclusion, we will collect data on donut consumption. If direct data collection in classrooms is warranted, it will be discussed with individual teachers.

For accuracy, it is necessary to audiotape all interviews, which will be transcribed. During the large group interviews, it will also be necessary to videotape the interviews so the speaker can be identified on the audiotape. Speakers will be given pseudonyms and described in general terms (e.g., third grade teacher), but names of participants in the study will be strictly confidential. Neither the audiotapes not videotapes will be used for any other purpose unless informed consent is given by the speaker(s).

If you have any questions or concerns about the study, please feel free to call me at SUNY (777-2727) or at home (748-3667).

Sincerely,

Beverly Rainforth, PhD
Assistant Professor of Special Education

APPENDIX B
QUESTIONNAIRE ON INCLUSION

Role: Classroom Teacher Support Teacher How many years?

Which students with severe disabilities have you taught? (circle names)

Mark Sara David John Randy Justin Kelly

Jamie Mary Todd Ben Jill Jan Chrystal

The purpose of this study is to identify the effects of integrating students with severe disabilities on regular education teachers in inclusive schools. Several effects were identified through interviews and observations, but the effects vary for different teachers. To help clarify these variations, please complete the following questionnaire. I welcome any comments that would qualify, expand, or otherwise clarify your response. Thanks for your help.

1. In my class, grade _____, we teach about students with disabilities
   (a) as a formal part of the curriculum (e.g., alike and different)
   (b) incidentally, as the need arises, or
   (c) both

2. With regard to adoption of developmentally appropriate practices,
   (a) having students with severe disabilities in my class forced me to make changes in my curriculum that benefitted all students;
   (b) I would have moved in this direction, whether or not I had students with severe disabilities in my class; or
   (c) my curriculum already reflected this approach.

3. With regard to a philosophy of "success for all,"
   (a) I really believed this, so I believed students with severe disabilities would be successful in my class too; or
   (b) I didn't really expect everyone to succeed until I saw students with severe disabilities succeed at their own level in my class. Then I realized all students could succeed if I recognized their level.

4. I Usually / Frequently / Occasionally plan lessons for the class
   (a) U F O so all students can use manipulatives
   (b) U F O so lessons reach students with varied learning styles
   (c) U F O so students can demonstrate knowledge in varied ways
   (d) U F O so students of varied abilities can participate and succeed
   (e) U F O with mixed ability groupings
   (f) U F O with same ability groupings
   (g) U F O with cooperative goal structures
   (h) U F O with competitive goal structures
   (i) U F O with individualistic (neither cooperative nor competitive) goal structures

6. In my class, students with severe disabilities are/were included in the regular activities, with or without adaptations, (indicate amount)
   (a) for most / some / little of the day during regular activities
   (b) for most / some / little of the time during speech therapy
   (c) for most / some / little of the time during physical therapy
   (d) for most / some / little of the time during occupational therapy
   The amount of inclusion was appropriate for (a) (b) (c) (d)
   too little for (a) (b) (c) (d)

7. Indicate the frequency that each discipline participates in team planning sessions.

	TYPICAL	DESIRED
(a) regular class teacher	_____ times per week	_____ times per week
(b) support teacher	_____ times per week	_____ times per week
(c) speech therapist	_____ times per month	_____ times per month
(d) occupational therapist	_____ times per month	_____ times per month
(e) physical therapist	_____ times per month	_____ times per month

8. True False Based on my experience, I expect that children with severe disabilities who are more active and disruptive will participate in fewer inclusive classroom activities and more parallel activities than children with multiple disabilities.

9. With regard to challenging behavior, (circle all that apply)
   (a) I am more likely to accept, ignore, and/or overlook minor disruptions than before I had students with severe disabilities in my class.
   (b) I am more likely to stand back and let children work things out than before I had students with severe disabilities in my class.
   (c) having students with severe disabilities in my class hasn't really influenced my style in this area.

10. True False I feel as though having students with severe disabilities in my class gave me "permission" to be more a flexible and creative teacher.

11. Regarding IEP planning, I participate in planning with
   (a) support teacher on my team
   (b) therapists on my students' team
   (c) parents of students with disabilities
   (d) I do not participate in IEP planning, although I have a copy of the IEP and I know the goals for my students

12. Having students with severe disabilities in my class, I have experienced ongoing stress from (indicate whether Never, Previously, or Currently)
   (a) N P C additional time required for planning
   (b) N P C time to individualize/adapt during the day
   (c) N P C student interruptions that disrupt the class
   (d) N P C inadequate professional/paraprofessional support
   (e) N P C too many adults in the classroom
   (f) N P C insufficient attention to my priorities for students

RESULTS OF QUESTIONNAIRE ON INCLUSION

Note: Numerals in parentheses indicate the number of responses.

Role: Classroom Teacher (6) Support Teacher (1) No Response (1)
How many years? (2-20; median 6)

Which students with severe disabilities have you taught?
(2-13 of named students; median 3)

1. In my class, grade _____, we teach about students with disabilities
   (0) as a formal part of the curriculum (e.g., alike and different)
   (0) incidentally, as the need arises, or
   (8) both

2. With regard to adoption of developmentally appropriate practices,
   (4) having students with severe disabilities in my class forced me to make changes in my curriculum that benefitted all students;
   (4) I would have moved in this direction, whether or not I had students with severe disabilities in my class; or
   (0) my curriculum already reflected this approach.

3. With regard to a philosophy of "success for all,"
   (8) I really believed this, so I believed students with severe disabilities would be successful in my class too; or
   (0) I didn't really expect everyone to succeed until I saw students with severe disabilities succeed at their own level in my class. Then I realized all students could succeed if I recognized their level.

4. I Usually / Frequently / Occasionally plan lessons for the class
   (3)U (4)F (1)O so all students can use manipulatives
   (6)U (2)F (0)O so lessons reach students with varied learning styles
   (5)U (3)F (0)O so students can demonstrate knowledge in varied ways
   (7)U (1)F (0)O so students of varied abilities can participate & succeed
   (7)U (1)F (0)O with mixed ability groupings
   (0)U (1)F (6)O (1)Never with same ability groupings
   (7)U (1)F (0)O with cooperative goal structures
   (0)U (0)F (4)O (3)Rarely/Never with competitive goal structures
   (0)U (3)F (5)O with individualistic (neither cooperative nor competitive) goal structures

5. In my class, students with severe disabilities are/were included in the regular activities, with or without adaptations, (indicate amount)
   for (7)most (1)some (1)little of the day during regular activities (RA)
   for (4)most (2)some (2)little of the time during speech therapy (ST)
   for (0)most (7)some (1)little of the time during physical therapy (PT)
   for (4)most (4)some (0)little of the time during occupational therapy (OT)
   The amount of inclusion was appropriate for RA(7) ST(4) PT(5) OT(6)
   too little for RA(0) ST(3) PT(1) OT(1)

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6. Indicate the frequency that each discipline participates in team planning sessions.

	TYPICAL (median)	DESIRED(median)
regular class teacher	3-5 times per week	3-5 times per week
support teacher	1-5 times per week	3-5 times per week
speech therapist	1 times per month	4 times per month
occupational therapist	0-1 times per month	4 times per month
physical therapist	0-1 times per month	4 times per month

7. True (4) False (3) Based on my experience, I expect that children with severe disabilities who are more active and disruptive will participate in fewer inclusive classroom activities and more parallel activities than children with multiple disabilities. [2 respondents said "false" but added comments about challenges of including these students.]

8. With regard to challenging behavior, (circle all that apply)
   (7) I am more likely to accept, ignore, and/or overlook minor disruptions than before I had students with severe disabilities in my class.
   (8) I am more likely to stand back and let children work things out than before I had students with severe disabilities in my class.
   (0) having students with severe disabilities in my class hasn't really influenced my style in this area.

9. True (7) False (0) I feel as though having students with severe disabilities in my class gave me "permission" to be more a flexible and creative teacher.

10. Regarding IEP planning, I participate in planning with
   (8) support teacher on my team
   (7) therapists on my students' team
   (8) parents of students with disabilities
   (0) I do not participate in IEP planning, although I have a copy of the IEP and I know the goals for my students

12. Having students with severe disabilities in my class, I have experienced <u>ongoing</u> stress from (indicate whether Never, Previously, or Currently)
   N(2) P(4) C(2) additional time required for planning
   N(1) P(2) C(2) time to individualize/adapt during the day
   N(1) P(3) C(3) student interruptions that disrupt the class
   N(2) P(3) C(0) inadequate professional/paraprofessional support
   N(5) P(0) C(0) too many adults in the classroom
   N(3) P(2) C(0) insufficient attention to my priorities for students

APPENDIX C
CLASSROOM OBSERVATION PROTOCOL

Date Time Grade Teacher

Observer Students

Activity

Grouping

Materials

Learning styles

Participation by students with severe disabilities

Adaptations

Assistance/support for students with severe disabilities

Team

Problem

Resolved? Yes No

Problem solvers

Outcome

Source of stress? Yes No

Minor problems overlooked/Students directed to handle

Assessment of students with severe disabilities

Self-assessment

KEY FOR CLASSROOM OBSERVATIONS

Activity [describe the activity observed, including the roles/participation of staff and students without disabilities]

Grouping [size, makeup, and location of groups; roles of all students; involvement of students with severe disabilities in group; goal structure - individualistic, cooperative, or competitive]

Materials [list materials used by class in general and, if different, by students with severe disabilities; note types of manipulatives used by one or more students]

Learning styles [evidence of multiple ways for students to demonstrate knowledge; evidence of multisensory approach - visual, auditory, kinesthetic, tactile input/output; evidence of Bloom's taxonomy]

Participation by students with severe disabilities [describe]

Adaptations [in methods, materials, curriculum; for curriculum, same activity different skill/step/materials, parallel activity tied to same theme, separate activity unrelated to theme]

Assistance/support for students with severe disabilities [type/amount of support needed vs given; source of support - reg. class teacher, support teacher, related service provider, paraprofessional, another student]

Team [adults who enter classroom; what they do with whom; time arrive/depart]

Problem [describe issue, who raises it, circumstances]

Problem solvers [list adults by role, count students +/- disabilities]

Outcome [describe solution, whether implemented, whether satisfactory]

Source of stress? Yes No [for adults/children in classroom, evidence that it did/not/might/not produce stress]

Minor problems overlooked/Students directed to handle [list instances]

Assessment of students with severe disabilities [any evidence that teachers engaged in "kid-watching", who did it, what it comprised]

Self-assessment [any evidence that teachers engaged in reflection about success of lesson/instructional strategies/behavior management/inclusion, particularly for students with severe disabilities]